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[THE UNWELCOME VISITOR.]

LADY ROSLYN'S MYSTERY.

CHAPTER XIII.

I feel

Of this dull sickness at my heart afraid!
And in my eyes the death-sparks flash and fade;
And something seems to steal
Over my bosom like a frozen hand!

Willis's Poems.

As Alix pursued her way up the hill to the Lodge, her mind naturally reverted to Rellen Polack, who had hitherto appeared to her a bright paragon of many excellencies, but his star paled before that of the young stranger who had rescued her from Tenton Brook. She did not like to confess it to herself, but the effeminacy of the son of Mrs. Polack was no longer fascinating to her; the bland, soft tones of his voice compared unfavourably with the clear, ringing tones of Hubert Sayton, and his softness of manner was not half so charming, as the restless activity and outspoken frankness of the young visitor.

Alix compared her rescuer with Rellen, simply because the latter was the only young gentleman with whom she was well acquainted, and because also Rellen had hitherto been the embodiment of her girlish dreams.

She had never dreamed of his giving her other than a brother's love, and her affection for him was the pure and earnest affection of a younger sister, who admires while she loves.

"Each is perfect in his own way," she murmured, as she approached the little gate opening into the garden of the Lodge. "I would not change dear Rellen in a single respect, not even to make him like Hubert Sayton. Rellen is noble and good, and has been my life-long friend and brother, and Hubert—"

She paused, a scarlet flush creeping into her clear dark cheeks, and a tender light shining in her brown eyes.

She had laid her hand on the gate-latch, when the gate was opened from within, and a gray-haired, spectacled gentleman came hurrying out of the garden.

He was the village physician.

He started and stammered profuse apologies, as Alix hastily stepped back, and he would have entered his waiting gig, which the maiden in her abstraction had not noticed, but that she exclaimed, in sudden alarm :

"Is any one ill at the Lodge, doctor? It can't be Aunt Lettice. She was quite well when I went out to walk!"

The doctor gave the maiden a pitying look, and answered :

"Mrs. Polack is, I think, a little nervous about your prolonged absence, Miss Alix. Your presence will restore her again."

With a bow he passed on to his gig, but, as if with a sudden thought, he returned to the young girl, and said, hurriedly :

"You can't be too careful of your aunt, Miss Alix. She ought not to be excited about anything!"

"With this injunction he turned on his heel, entered his gig, and drove rapidly away.

Alix looked after him with a strange feeling of apprehension, and then, pale and shivering, entered the garden and walked up the path to the dwelling.

She had gathered from the doctor's visit to the Lodge, and his remark, that Mrs. Polack was very ill, and her alarm almost paralyzed her.

Could it be that apprehension at her prolonged absence had made her friend ill? Or had the old lady been stricken with fever?

She walked into the hall, threw aside her hat, cloak and sketch-book, and would have ascended to Mrs. Polack's chamber, but that her heart failed her.

"I must calm myself before I go up to her," she thought, the tears almost blinding her. "Perhaps the servants can tell me how she was taken ill!"

She dashed away her tears, turned the knob of the drawing-room door with an unsteady hand, and then entered the apartment.

To her astonishment, Mrs. Polack was seated there as she had left her, her embroidery in her hand, and her vase of daisies and pansies at her elbow.

The old lady was industriously plying her needle, and her face was as calm and severe as it had ever

been. There was no flush of fever upon it, no trace of pain in the kindly eyes that looked up at the maiden's entrance.

"How long you have been absent, Alix!" she exclaimed, as the young girl came to her side. "I have been really alarmed about you!"

"I could not come before, Aunt Lettice, and I had such a cruel shock at the gate just now!" cried Alix, overwhelming the old lady with caresses. "I met the doctor, and he told me that I must take great care of you, just as if you were very ill. It was a wicked jest, and frightened me terribly."

"He should not have told you any such thing!" she declared, in a pained tone. "He should have known better, but men have no discretion it seems to me."

"But you are not ill, aunty? You are well—"

"I am as well as usual. Did you bring me the sketch?"

Alix answered in the affirmative, and then brought in her sketch-book, and exhibited the picture she had drawn.

"It is finely done, dear. Tenton Fall is really well worth seeing. I do not wonder that you did not return earlier. What a pretty child you have sketched on the bank there. Isn't that a little faulty? A child in that position must have been in danger of falling over into the water!"

"He did, aunty. It was the miller's little son, and while I was drawing, his playmates started him and he fell over the bank."

Alix narrated the occurrences that had followed, speaking of her own part in them with quiet modesty, and as if what she had done were the most natural thing in the world. She spoke of her rescuer, but did not describe him, nor permit to be seen the strong interest he had awakened in her heart.

"My brave little heroine!" exclaimed Mrs. Polack, when the recital was completed. "What will Rellen say when he hears of your kindness and presence of mind, to say nothing of your courage? Are you sure," she added, "that your clothing is quite dry, and that you haven't taken cold?"



Alix having replied in the affirmative, the old lady inquired:

"Who was your rescuer, my dear?"

Alix drooped her head to conceal her blushes, and answered:

"He was a young man who happened to be travelling in this direction. He said his name was Hubert Sayton."

"Hubert Sayton! I have seen that name somewhere. I think it was in that paper that came this morning. I just glanced over it, and I am sure I saw that name. Give me the paper, love."

Alix obeyed, and her friend searched the columns of the journal for the paragraph that had caught her eye that morning.

"Here it is," she said, at last, smoothing the paper carefully. "It is in an account of a grand marriage between the Lady Adine Sayton and the Earl of Roslyn. It says that 'the bride was attended by ten bridesmaids,' and that 'she was given away by her guardian, Sir Horace Hawkweird, whose great wealth and benevolence are well-known'—but that isn't it. Ah, I have found it now. 'The only near relative of the young bride is her brother Hubert, Viscount Sayton, who has recently attained his majority.' But your rescuer, Alix, is not likely to have been Lord Sayton. It is probably a mere coincidence of names."

"The age is about the same," murmured Alix.

"I noticed the name of Sayton in the paper particularly," continued Mrs. Polack, not heeding the maiden's remark, "from a rather singular circumstance which happened years ago. Rellen was then in London, engaged in speculations, as he is now. He used to come home frequently, and was in the habit of leaving many of his things here. The last time he came before his absence of years, he left here one of his coats, besides other wearing apparel. After I received his letter announcing his departure for India, I looked over his things, intending to put them away. In the pocket of his coat I found a lady's handkerchief, with a faint odour of jasmine about it. It was a costly trifle of point lace, with the smallest bit of cambric in the centre, and on that was embroidered in the tiniest possible letters the name of 'Adine Sayton,' with a crest. It must have belonged to this same lady who has married Lord Roslyn, and Rellen must have found it somewhere. I gave it to him after his return a few weeks ago, and he said he would restore it to the owner if he could find her."

"It must have been Lord Sayton who rescued me, Aunt Lettice," said Alix, thoughtfully. "His name is not common, and this young gentleman looked every inch a lord—I might say, a prince!"

"He has pleased your romantic fancy, I see, Alix," said the old lady, kindly, "and I might fear he had touched your heart, only that I know your affections are fixed upon one who is more than a mere chance acquaintance, and whose care for you has extended over many years. I know your mind to be too well-regulated, love, to permit you to cherish an interest in one whose station in life is probably far above your own, and who might recoil from the mystery enveloping you."

"What must you think of me, Aunt Lettice," asked the young girl, in confusion.

"All that is good and tender, my pet," answered she, caressingly, stooping to kiss the bright young face at her side.

As she lifted her head, Alix saw that she was deathly pale, and that she had pressed her hand to her bosom.

"What is it, aunty?" she cried, in alarm. "You are ill! Let me send again for the doctor."

She sprang to her feet, but the old lady gently detained her, bidding her resume her seat.

"Calm yourself, Alix. Show the same courage that you evinced in rescuing the miller's child. I have something to tell you that will try you greatly."

Alix's face expressed a vague fear, but she endeavoured to regain her calmness.

Mrs. Polack hesitated a moment, shrinking from her proposed task, and then she said:

"The doctor advised me to tell you months ago, but I could not bear to darken your young life. Besides, Rellen was not here, and you had no one to look to but me. It is different now. Rellen is come, and in him you have a friend who will not fail you!"

"I don't understand, Aunt Lettice," whispered the maiden.

"My poor love, the shock will be all the greater then!"

And the old lady's tones were expressive of tender love, and her face relaxed from its severity into a pitying sorrow.

"No one knows the secret but the doctor, for I could not shock my son so soon after his return. He loves his mother so. Have you not noticed, Alix,

that I have driven out alone very frequently during the past few months, declining your attendance, and that of every one save Michael?"

"Yes, aunty, but I attached little importance to the fact, for the pony-chaise is only large enough for two."

"When I went out alone, Alix," said Mrs. Polack slowly, "I always went to the doctor's."

The tone, more than the words, frightened Alix, and her face grew very pale, as she inquired:

"Why, Aunt Lettice?"

Mrs. Polack took the girl's trembling hands in both her own, and answered:

"Can you not guess, love? Be brave and strong, while I tell you. For months a terrible, cancerous disease has been preying upon me, and eating its way slowly but surely to my heart. I have tried every remedy, but all in vain. The end is inevitable—and sure at hand!"

A wild wail broke from the maiden's lips.

At this sound the old lady's self-possession appeared almost to desert her, and she clutched the girl's hands, saying, entreatingly:

"Oh, Alix, for my sake be calm. Your grief almost kills me—"

With a great effort, Alix repressed all outward sign of her agitation, except such as looked from her terrified eyes, and exerted herself to soothe her friend

"Why did you not tell me before, Aunt Lettice? Have you borne the suffering and the secret in silence all these months to spare me?"

The invalid nodded.

"If I had only suspected it!" moaned Alix. "I noticed that you were pale at times, and that you were growing thin, and that you ate little sometimes and voraciously at others, but I thought you were grieving on account of Rellen's unknown fate."

"It was grief on his account that brought this upon me, dear; but he must never know it. Promise me that you will never tell him."

Alix promised.

"Rellen has been a dear, good son to me," said the mother, fondly, "and you have been a devoted daughter, Alix. I love you as dearly as though I were indeed your mother. I wish I might stay with you both, but I am willing to die!"

"Oh, aunty!"

"While you were gone out this morning, my child, I had a terrible paroxysm and was obliged to send for the doctor. He advised me no longer to delay telling you the truth, for my life now hangs upon a thread. I may die at any moment!"

The girl's frame shook with suppressed sobs, but she did not speak.

"I had no thought that I was so near the final change," continued Mrs. Polack, mournfully. "I wish I had known it yesterday when Rellen was here. He must be told, Alix, and I cannot tell him. You know how he loves me, and how I love him!"

"I will tell him, Aunt Lettice," said Alix, with a calmness that surprised herself.

"I thought you would offer to do so. He must be told without delay, my child. And something must be done to render you quite safe from that man who brought you here. He will yet cause you trouble, unless you have a legal protector. But we will speak of that when Rellen comes."

"Had he not better be sent for?"

"Yes, immediately. I may not be alive next week. Oh, if we only had his address, so that we could telegraph to him. But write, Alix. He will get the letter to-morrow at the latest."

There were writing materials near at hand, and the maiden hastened to indite a note to Rellen Polack, requesting his immediate return home, as his mother was ill.

"That won't frighten him, will it Alix?" asked the old lady.

"I think not, Aunt Lettice. It will only prepare him for what is to happen. We ought not to let him be quite unprepared."

"True," and Mrs. Polack handed back the note to be enclosed in an envelope and addressed.

She watched Alix as she performed the task and then rang for Michael. She listened as the maiden directed him to post the letter immediately, and when it had been despatched she leaned wearily back in her chair, letting her embroidery, which till now had remained in her lap, fall to the floor.

Alix picked it up and laid it on the table.

"Put it away, dear," she said. "I shall never touch it again!"

Alix put it out of sight with trembling hands.

"Is there anything I can do for you, aunty?" she asked, noticing how weary the old lady suddenly looked.

"Yes; help me up to my room. I want to lie down."

The young girl came forward, assisted her friend to arise to her feet, and gently supported her, as they went upstairs to Mrs. Polack's room.

It seemed as if the strength that had sustained the invalid during months of suffering had all departed from her with the revelation of her secret.

She suffered the maiden to disrobe her, and she then lay down in her bed, with a heavy sigh.

"Lie still till dinner-time, Aunt Lettice, and then you will feel better," said Alix, smoothing the pillow and the soft gray hair that flowed over it.

"Alix," said Mrs. Polack, impressively, "my work is done. I shall never rise from my bed again."

The maiden sustained herself by leaning against the bed-post, her strength for the moment being all gone.

"Open the windows wide, darling, and let the room be as pleasant as possible. I don't like sick-rooms."

Alix drew aside the curtains and opened the windows. She brought a vase of flowers to the little stand by the bedside, and looped back the white bed-draperies, while Mrs. Polack reclined on her pillow and regarded her lovingly.

"I am glad to have it all understood at last," said the invalid, quietly. "I shall no longer be obliged to keep up when I am unable to do so, and I can spend my last days in peace. I shall have you and Rellen with me, and that will soothe my fierce pains."

Alix had been looking from the window, and now said:

"Michael is returning, Aunt Lettice, and he has a letter, I think. Will it hurt you to see it, if it should prove to be from my guardian?"

Mrs. Polack replied in the negative.

After a few minutes of waiting, a servant brought up the missive, and Alix exclaimed:

"It's from Rellen, aunty, and is addressed to you."

"Please read it, dear."

Alix complied with the request.

It was a brief note, and to the effect that business had suddenly called him to France, and that he should probably be gone two or three weeks, but that he should hasten to Anerly Lodge immediately on his return. He said he should bring some pretty trifles for his loved ones at home, and that he hoped, when next he should see Alix, to say something that should secure her happiness and his own.

The latter sentence the maiden scarcely heeded, in her disappointment and anxiety.

It flashed upon her mind that this sudden journey to France had something to do with the visit of the rough-looking countryman, with the bird-call, who had held converse with Rellen in the garden on the previous evening.

Her mind was recalled to her friend by hearing a deep groan of disappointment, and she bent herself to the task of soothing the distressed invalid, who moaned:

"I shall never see my son again, Alix. I shall not live until his return. Oh, if I had but told him yesterday! If a messenger could but be sent after him now. But it's too late—to too late!"

She lay back on her pillow, and closed her eyes, from which the tears stole down upon her wan cheek.

How thin and pale she looked, now that her determined will had given way, and she no longer struggled against her fate.

Alix kissed away her tears, and sat down by the bedside, whispering words of consolation and hope, which fell upon the invalid's ears like soft strains of music. But, despite the maiden's assumed calmness, her heart was agonized, for that wild wail of the mother was echoed in her own soul—"too late! too late!"

She felt that Rellen Polack would never in this life look upon his mother's face again.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Avant! be gone! thou hast set me on the rack; I swear 'tis better to be much abus'd,

Than but to know a little." *Shakespeare.*

A WEEK had passed at Roslyn Manor since the earl's visit to his bride's boudoir, and nothing had been said by either about the bracelet, from the loss of which the countess had apprehended so much misery. Every day, Lady Roslyn had appeared at dinner, her face bright and smiling, and her hair, throat, and arms glittering with costly jewels, and one would not have dreamed that her heart was burdened with a load of anguish, and that she dreaded every moment some allusion from her husband to her half-promise to wear his favourite ornament—now cherished as the dearest possession of Alix Erie.

But no allusion was made to it. The earl noticed that she did not wear it, but no thought or suspicion of the truth entered his brain. A passionate love and admiration for his young bride was springing up in his heart—a love to which his boyish fancy for Mrs. Adrian had been puerile—and he would

have regarded her display of the ornament as an encouragement to his love, just as he now regarded its absence as an intended rebuke to his presumption, for attempting to infringe upon the stipulations of the strange compact he had himself proposed upon their bridal night.

He redoubled his attentions to the countess, exhibiting to her a gentle deference that would have won almost any woman's heart, and which startled Vayle Malvern from his vain dreams, but Adine Roslyn received his unobtrusive homage as mere brotherly kindness, and requited it with sisterly courtesy.

The earl grew moody when alone, and was at times almost rude to Mrs. Adrian, between whom and Lady Roslyn several visits had been exchanged, and the shrewd widow was beginning to see how futile were all her hopes of supplanting her rival, and to think of returning to her congenial Austrian home.

Every morning, a delicious little bouquet, cut in the conservatory and arranged by the earl's own hands, was placed beside the countess's plate at table, and every evening a similar bunch of flowers was laid upon her *prie-dieu*; but they were always left to wither, and the husband never knew whether his bride had even noticed his offerings.

But the countess loved flowers, he knew. The wide conservatory had become her favourite retreat, and more than once his lordship had seen her fair hands engaged in training a vine, or wreathing blossoms into her hair.

A week had passed, as we have said, and the lady of Roslyn was seated in her boudoir, which was a fairy region of light and fragrance.

The soft summer night had long since settled lightly down upon the manor, and starlight and shadows were in rivalry upon the lawn, and in the park and gardens.

The duties of the day were all fulfilled, dinner and supper had been served, and the bride had retired to her own apartments for the night.

Her maid had not yet been summoned, and her ladyship looked forward to a quiet hour of self-communion, the earl being in his study.

The long windows opening upon the balcony were sjar, and their lace drapery fluttered gently in the night breeze. The light shone softly through their ground glass globes, irradiating every article in that white-and-gold-hued chamber, and making a halo about the feminine head with its wealth of pale golden hair, as the youthful countess sat beneath the branching chandelier.

The mask of pride and calmness she had worn since her bridal night was laid aside. Her pure, spiritual face had a death-like paleness, her lips were compressed, and her gray eyes had in them a look of wild, despairing horror.

Her hands lay before her as if lifeless upon her mauve robe, and she was regarding her marriage ring with an expression of loathing.

"If I could only be free again!" she said, in a low, fearful whisper. "If I could only be Adine Eustace once more! This marriage has been a fearful mistake on both sides. Eustace should have wedded Mrs. Adrian, whom he loves, and I——"

She started and looked around her apprehensively, a cold, gray pallor overspreading her lovely face.

"And I," she resumed, in that same hollow whisper, "I could then have better struggled with my fate. The awful disgrace which may come at any moment would have fallen upon me alone—no, not me alone, but upon Hubert also! But he is young, and loves me; he would have defended me, and we would have gone away together to some foreign country, and hidden ourselves. But as it is, nothing but darkness is before me," and she shivered as if with cold, though the night was sultry. "If the secret should be betrayed now, or even suspected, the name of Roslyn will ring from one end of the kingdom to the other, and Eustace will become a mark for jeering fingers! Oh, heaven, that the innocent should suffer for the guilty!"

She wrung her jewelled hands silently, and her lips grew pale and bloodless.

Under her terrible anguish her thoughts were confused, and she could scarcely understand them, save when they sounded upon her hearing. So they again formed themselves into whispers.

"Eustace thinks I love Harold Bevan; and Lechelle taunted me with having married the earl through pique, because Bevan had not offered himself. But both are wide of the truth. I do not care for Harry Bevan. I did not marry through pique, any more than for love. I married, as many women marry, because I was tired of being single; because I was tired of adulation, and an endless round of gaiety; because suitors continued to offer themselves, and it pained me to be obliged to hear their vows; and because Lord Roslyn seemed the most eligible. I knew he did not love me, and I could

bear better to marry one who did not love me, than one who did. But I should never have married if I had dreamt that Alaric Lechelle still lived—never, never!"

She looked down upon her tightly-clasped hands as if not seeing them, and a low moan escaped her lips.

The minutes passed, and still her golden head remained bowed, and her gray eyes stared desparately and vacantly into her lap.

She was suffering as brave and gifted spirits alone can suffer, and struggling as young and powerful organizations alone can struggle.

Thoughts of suicide assailed her desperate soul, thoughts of ending for ever the struggle that had begun, of finding in the grave a refuge from her pitiless enemy, and of burying her terrible secret in the tomb of the Roslyns, but those thoughts were but momentary.

Adine Roslyn was too brave to think of the coward's refuge, too reliant upon a Higher Power seriously to think of usurping Providence, and cutting short a life that to the world seemed all fair and joyous, but which was in reality a path of thorns.

Besides, would the secret be buried with her? Might it not be revealed when she should be gone, and her husband and the world anathematize her name, when she should be powerless to offer a single plea in self-defence? Might not Hubert hate her memory—Hubert, the only being whom she really loved?

Not with her death could come safety—but with the death of Count Lechelle, otherwise Rellan Pocock, the lover of Alix Erie.

"I thought he was dead," she said, hollowly. "If I had not believed him dead I should not have dared to marry. And now what can I do? If I leave my husband, as I am tempted to do, I shall only provoke scandal, perhaps suspicion. I must stay. But what can I do about that bracelet? If I knew the design exactly, I would have one made to represent it. But that would take time, and meanwhile Eustace may ask to see it. I fear he suspects already that something has happened to it. If I could only see Alaric! If I only knew his address! I would write, and beg him to restore the bracelet. Ah! what is that?"

She started, hearing a sudden rustling of the boughs of the tree, shading her window against the balcony, and she looked in that direction with a sudden thrill of hope and expectation.

The next moment there was a cat-like step upon the balcony, the door-like windows moved slightly, and a hand lightly parted the curtains of lace, and the young countess caught the glimmer of jewels as the lamplight fell upon the softly-moving fingers.

And then a face, a fair face with a blonde moustache and keen blue eyes, peered through the parted folds.

As if satisfied with this preliminary investigation, the strange visitor pushed open the windows, and stepped quietly into the boudoir.

As the reader has suspected, he was the Count Lechelle.

"All alone, Adine?" was his greeting, as he bowed low to the bride, and half-closed the windows, shading them with the lace and gold damask.

"I was just wishing for you, Alaric," she responded, after the first glow of surprise.

"Were you, indeed?" he exclaimed, lightly. "You know the improved adage—think of the angels and you will hear the rustling of their wings. Permit me to secure our interview from interruption!"

He moved across the floor, locked the doors, and then approached her, seating himself beside her.

"You were wishing for me, you said," he remarked, placently. "There must be some secret sympathy between us, Adine. Can it be that I have kindled a flame of love in the breast of Lady Roslyn?"

"Cease!" she returned, with an imperious gesture. "The only passion I can ever entertain for you, Count Lechelle, is that of bitter hatred—"

"And fear!"

She grew even paler, involuntarily acknowledging his assertion.

"Yes, I fear you!" she said, bitterly.

The count smiled, twirled his moustache, played with his rings, and altogether seemed as harmless as a playful kitten, or as in some moods the jungle-tiger to which we have compared him.

But the Countess of Roslyn looked beneath the surface, and knew him as he was.

"Alaric," she said, abruptly, as he did not reply, "the bracelet I gave you a week or more ago was a gift to me from my husband before my marriage. In my trepidation, I did not observe which ornament it was I gave you."

"Well?"

"I must have it back!"

"Must, Adine?" and he arched his brows,

"Yes, I must have it. If you have disposed of it, you must procure it again. It belonged to the late Lady Roslyn, and is prized by the earl beyond all the family jewels. His lordship was her second and most favoured son, and she gave him the bracelet before she knew he would be the earl. He desired me to wear it, and does not suspect that it is not in my possession."

"Why did you not tell him that you had lost it?"

"I could not tell him an untruth," and Lady Roslyn lifted her head haughtily; "that would be an implied one, although I fear not literally," and she sighed. "You must return it!"

"That is easier said than done," he answered, thinking of the flush of pleasure that had kindled in Alix's clear dark cheeks when he had clasped the jewel on her arm.

"Why so?"

The count smiled at her sudden alarm, and answered:

"Unfortunately, I am in rather straitened circumstances, Adine. I was obliged to sell the bracelet for three hundred pounds——"

"It is sold then!"

"Yes, but you need not look so frightened. It can be bought back. In fact, it is not exactly sold, but exchanged with a very obliging friend of mine, and it is now reposing in his coffer. I grieve for your distress, and if I had the necessary sum I would redeem the toy."

"You can buy it back then for three hundred pounds?"

He bowed.

"I will give you the money to purchase it," said the countess with a sudden look of hope.

She arose and went to her writing-desk, a pretty little portable affair of square blocks of ivory, inlaid with chased silver, which stood upon a buhl table, and, unlocking it, proceeded to search its inner compartments.

Lechelle watched her idly through his half-shut eyes.

He saw her move aside the dainty stores of delicately tinted paper, the pretty, chased writing utensils, and press her hand upon a secret spring, upon which a cleverly hidden drawer sprang to the light.

There was a paper or two hidden there, and a flat pocket-book—not the pretty velvet purse with its slender gold chain, from which she had supplied him before.

The pocket-book was well filled with interesting specimens of the productions of the Bank of England; and as the countess unfolded three crisp notes, and handed them to him silently, he smiled, and observed:

"I see that you have taken my advice, Adine, to keep yourself supplied with money. Put it up, though. I do not wish any for myself this time. I came to see you for an entirely different reason."

He took the three notes offered him, and put them carelessly into his own purse, while the lady stood undecided, her hand upon her open purse.

If he had not come for money, why had he come?

Asking herself this question, the countess replaced her pocket-book in the secret drawer, which she closed securely, and then, after locking the desk, she resumed her seat.

"I see you are wondering why I came," he said, reading her thoughts. "You shall soon know, my Lady Adine. I do not like to break it to you suddenly, for the news may be disagreeable."

The countess did not speak; she waited.

"I promised to send you the bracelet, didn't I," asked Lechelle, carelessly. "I shall be busy tomorrow and can't see my friend, but you shall have the jewel this week. You can put his lordship off if he speaks to you about it."

There was no use in arguing or pleading that its return should be hastened, so the countess remained silent, thinking, possibly, that it was well if she got it back at all.

"You do not ask the reason of my coming, Adine, but I will relieve your unexpressed anxiety," and Lechelle's tones were studiedly careless. "You remember what a sensation I made in society a few years ago, before you had emerged from the care of your governess, how the young fellows copied my tie and used my favourite perfumery, and how the young ladies smiled upon the foreign count and thought his moustache perfection?"

"I remember!" said the countess almost inaudibly.

"I was the rage then," declared Lechelle, in a tone of great self-complacency. "It was a nine days' wonder when I disappeared. There were a few who began to suspect that I was not a count, because the name of Lechelle was unknown in the French peerage, but I had some good friends. Your guardian, Sir Horace Hawkward, was one of them. Those friends of mine have always thought that there was a kind of mystery about me, and that I should reappear again

some day, moustache and all, with my splendid horses, dappier little tiger, and elegant ties. I should not wonder," he added, "if their faith were to be rewarded by fulfilment."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, that Count Lechelle shall resume his former position in English society!"

The Countess of Roslyn looked almost paralyzed, and slowly ejaculated:

"How will you explain your sudden disappearance, these years of absence?"

"Easily enough. My title is of Italian not French origin, although I am a Frenchman by birth and descent;" and I teeth glittered between his parted lips. "These years of absence from London have been spent in dutiful attendance upon my gouty old uncle, who has been ill at his chateau in the north of Italy, but at last my amiable relative has 'shuffled off the mortal coil,' and to show his gratitude for my filial devotion has left me his heir."

"Do you think that story will be believed?"

"I should like to see who will dispute it."

"But, supposing society received you, how can you keep up your pretence of being a gentleman of fortune, when you are obliged to come to me for money now?"

"Your question implies the answer, my dear Lady Roslyn. I am your pensioner. You will supply me with money, my queen. You are wealthy—far more so than my acquaintance even—and it is from your coffers I intend to draw the funds to support my rank in suitable style. Though not entirely," he added, as she looked at him with a desperate expression in her eyes. "I have other resources, and shall draw extensively upon them."

"It is best not to press me too far," she exclaimed, with something of defiance in her voice. "I will pay your moderate demands, but I will not support an establishment like that you desire. It is true that I am rich, but how long could I keep from my husband the draughts you would make on my income?"

"I understand that your fortune is settled upon yourself entirely, and that you have your own business agent, quite distinct from the earl's."

"It is true. But my husband may discover—"

"Not unless you expose the facts yourself."

There was nothing to do but to submit to Lechelle's propositus demands, and the bride relinquished her opposition.

"You have yielded like a sensible woman," declared her enemy, "and I may as well say that I don't intend to draw too heavily upon your purse. I don't wish to get you into any trouble—if only upon my own account. I shall take care not to embarrass you with your husband, nor to bring our affairs under his notice. But I have farther demands."

"You may as well spare yourself their utterance. You will not succeed in re-entering society, Alaric. The young nobleman whom you met in Paris and who introduced you here, has settled down upon his estates and is now a man of family. He disclaimed you after your disappearance, and you can do nothing alone."

"I know it, but I intend to be introduced by a person of the highest respectability," as the advertisements say."

Lady Roslyn looked incredulous.

"No person of influence would introduce you," she said, "and your friend must needs possess extraordinary respectability to be credited."

"I have chosen for my chaperon a lady of the greatest wealth, and highest rank. She is a beauty and a belle. Her slightest word will have weight. She is, in short, yourself!"

The countess was struck dumb by this assertion, and he continued:

"You will say to the world that last year, when you travelled with your brother and guardian, you met my uncle and myself at the Baths of Lucca, and that you are perfectly satisfied that I am what I pretend to be. You will, in fact, guarantee my genuineness. You will invite me to visit Roslyn, you will regard me with the greatest apparent favour."

"What will Lord Roslyn say?"

"As you agreed that he should go his way and you yours, I don't see that he can say anything," was the cool response. "He is too much absorbed in his first love to think of you."

"But I cannot—will not do it. What meanness—what treachery to introduce you to my friends and vouch for you, when I know where your missing years were spent, and that you were no count. You might marry some noble lady, simply on my recommendation."

"Not so, Adine. I know a little girl who is far more to me than any noble lady, and whose soft brown eyes I greatly prefer even to yours. One hair from her head is more valuable in my sight

than all your glittering tresses. But," and the earnestness faded from his tones, "I shall not deny myself dirtations even upon her account. You must introduce me, Adine. Deny my request at your peril!"

Lady Roslyn shuddered with terror at his peculiar tone, and he added :

"So sure as you deny me, I will proclaim the secret—"

"No, no!" cried the countess, in a half-shriek. "I—I yield! Oh, this is terrible. I loathe you and hate you, Alaric Lechelle. How can I bear to introduce you as my friend, when heaven only knows the fearful crimes you may commit under my protection. Oh, heaven pity me, for this man will not!"

"No, this man will not!" he said, mockingly. "But you consent?"

"I dare not refuse!" she answered, in a whisper.

"It is well. I have not fully arranged my plans yet, and cannot tell you when I shall call upon your services. But be ready. I will leave you now to enjoy your deserved slumbers. Good-night."

He bowed mockingly, unlocked the doors, and then stepped out upon the balcony. The countess looked after him in a frenzy of horror, and almost wishing that he would fall.

He did not fall. He vaulted into the tree, slid easily to the ground, and then sped away through the shadows and starlight.

He had not been unseen.

Lord Roslyn had been wandering for an hour amongst the shrubbery like an uneasy spirit, with his gaze reverting now and then to his wife's window, in the hope that she might appear, and that he might in secret feast his eyes upon the face that was growing ineffably dear to him.

Instead of beholding her, he saw the retreat of the Count Lechelle, who vanished before he could reach him. He did not see his face distinctly, nor would he have recognized him on meeting him again.

With his heart bursting with rage and jealousy, Lord Roslyn started towards the mansion.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

THE first idea of a magnetic telegraph has been discovered in an ancient Italian work published in 1636.

DURING the siege of Sebastopol a total of 253,042 rounds of shot and shell were thrown into the city from the English batteries alone, and in the last four days' bombardment 24,732.

BEFORE 1829 it required about 5 lbs. of coal to carry one ton a mile. In that year George Stephenson reduced it to 2½ lbs. of coke. It can now be brought less than a quarter of a pound per ton per mile.

PERSONS immediately interested in the subject are seriously discussing the feasibility of widening the river for a mile or so below London Bridge. There is only one difficulty—money. The cost would be enormous, and the expenditure on the Thames Embankment would be a trifle compared with the sum required.

DURING the forty-one years which passed since Stephenson ran his first train on the Stockton and Darlington line the railways of the kingdom absorbed 500,000,000 of capital, and extended over more than 14,000 miles. In 1865 the length of lines was 13,289 miles, of which more than a third were single lines, and the rest double; this was an increase of 500 miles over the preceding year.

In order to convey to the public some idea of the power of the battery now engaged at Shoeburyness in proving the resisting power of the various shields, it is said that if its five guns were fired simultaneously they would deliver about 16 cwt. of shot, propelled by 250 lbs. of powder, striking the target with a mechanical force sufficient to throw nearly a ton weight over the top of the highest mountain in the world.

THE cubic contents of St. Paul's Cathedral are, in round numbers, 5,000,000 ft.; the dome itself containing 2,000,000 ft., about equal to the whole capacity of Westminster Abbey. It is thoroughly warmed by the use of the well-known Gurney stoves, thirteen of which are placed in the crypt, and have large gratings over them, through which the warm air ascends, while others are provided with downcasts for the cold descending current to be warmed. The cost of the fuel is about 1d. per hour for each stove; the average cost of the whole fuel consumed during the three winter months is not more than 5s. per week.

MANY of our readers will be surprised to hear that by the close of this year London may expect to have a second tunnel beneath the Thames open for passenger traffic. Mr. Peter Barlow, jun., has drawn the plan for a new cutting near the Tower; a bill has

been carried through Parliament, and a contract has been all but completed for executing this important work. The plan is to sink a vertical shaft on each side of the river to a depth of fifty feet, furnished with an hydraulic lift, to raise and lower a carriage and ten passengers; to drive a tunnel in the clay under the river, not exceeding eight feet in diameter, between these shafts, and to line it as driven, partly with cast-iron, by which means it can be rendered air-tight, and all danger from the river avoided. The time necessary to complete the work is not expected to exceed six months, so that the metropolis may really hope to have the new subway opened by New Year's Day.

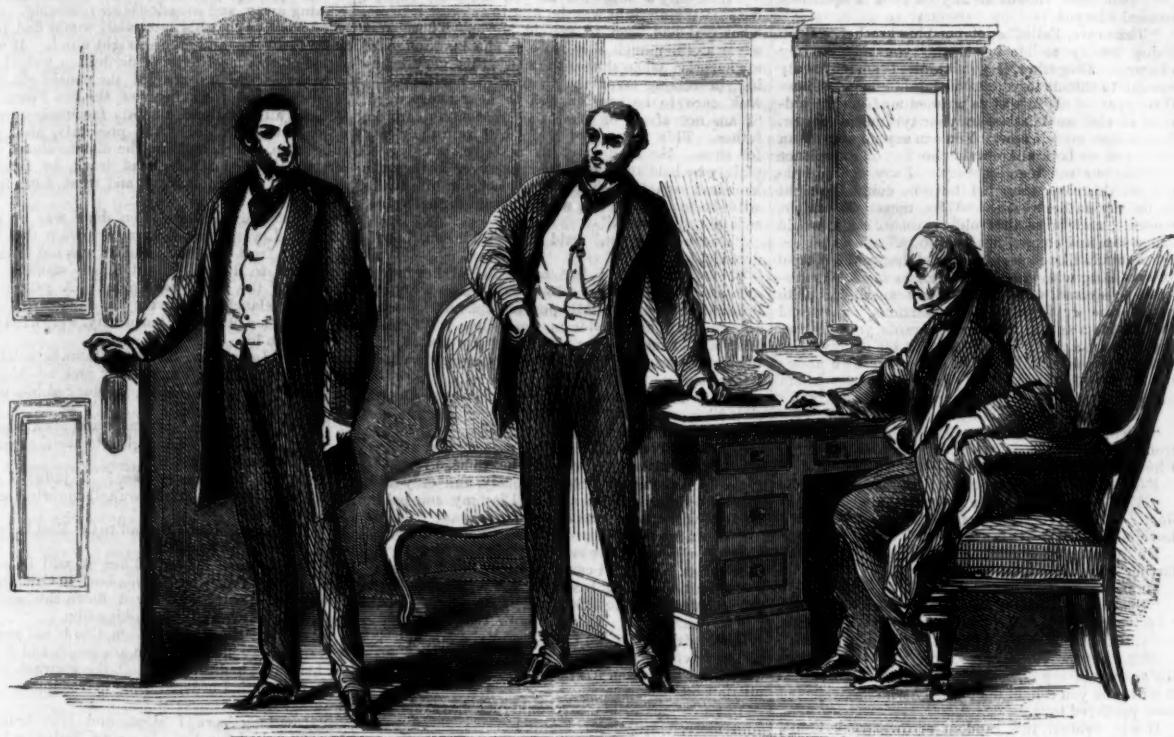
ICED MUSLINS.

ICED muslins for summer! It has, doubtless, occurred to many a one while admiring the beautiful effects produced by frost on windows, to imagine how delightful it would be if a sensation of coolness could be produced in the sultry days of summer by the aspect of those effects, artificially reproduced. The imagination has been realized. It is known that, by means of almost any ordinary salt, reduced to a liquid, and applied with a brush to window panes, those fairy-like forms of crystalline foliage may be successfully reproduced; and that, with a little chemical ingenuity, any tone of colour may be given to them, from snowy white to richest purple or coolest green. That process is well known; but another step in advance has recently been taken in the same direction, by means of which muslins may be similarly iced for summer wear. The line which separates pretty experiment from a commercial product is that which may be drawn between results obtained by an original manipulation, which can only be reproduced by a repetition of the same original means, and those results which, once perfected, can be produced ad infinitum, by mere mechanical processes. Daguerreotype was only a pretty toy till Mr. Talbot discovered the means of producing the same effect on paper, and a process for multiplying the image whence once produced.

An analogous method has been discovered by Mr. Bertach, and practically applied by M. Kuhlman, for multiplying, as from an engraved plate, the exquisite effects of the crystalline foliage just described. The process is simply as follows:—The elegant crystalline ramifications being produced in the first instance upon polished metal, instead of glass, a sheet of soft metal, such as lead, is then laid upon the saline crystallization, and a powerful roller is passed over it, by means of the steady and powerful pressure of which an exact impress of the foliated ramifications, in every minute detail, is secured. The metallic seal thus obtained is, however, too soft to print from, of which any number of impressions can be taken, in any tone of icy grays, or pale silvery greens, or any other cool tint. In order to secure continuity of design, without stop or interruption, the first manipulation takes place upon a polished cylinder, by means of which a continuous pattern, "never ending, still beginning," is imparted to as many thousand yards of any textile fabric as may be required. So that, for the first time in the fanciful story of fashion, iced muslin, for the summer season, may be had in any quantity. Oh, ye nymphs of icy heart, let me see you clothed in the appropriate livery of icy muslin!

DIAMONDS.—A paper to the Paris Academy of Sciences on the artificial production of black, colourless, and coloured diamonds has been sent in by M. Saix. If a current of chlorine, he says, be made to pass through cast-iron, when in a state of fusion, perchloride of iron is formed, which disappears by evaporation, leaving the carbon of the metal at liberty, in a crystallized state. It is notable that Sir Humphrey Davy believed that the carbon of diamonds contains a trace or tincture of chlorine, or some other halogen.

SAFETY LAMPS.—Since the Davy lamp, which gives but a faint light, is not perfectly secure against the dangers of explosion by firedamp, the English Government offered 4,000/- for the invention of a lamp burning without contact with the external air. Two young students of the Paris Polytechnic, MM. H. Liante and L. Denoyel, have invented a lamp which carries within it the requisite supply of gas. In exhibiting this lamp, a man, in the costume of a diver, descended with it into the sluice opposite the Mint, to the depth of 8 ft.; the lamp burned beneath the water, and with it, at the distance of two yards from him, the diver was able to inscribe, with a diamond, on a piece of glass, the date and hour of the experiment. The lamp burned for three-quarters of an hour in the water, and when it was hauled to the surface it was still burning, and the flame as bright as ever. It has been made by M. Delenil, constructor to the Polytechnic. Several members of the Institute, pupils of the Polytechnic, as well as several journalists, were present at the experiment.



OCTAVIA'S PRIDE.

BY THE

Author of "Captain Fratley," "Leaves of Fate," &c.

CHAPTER III.

"YOU have no more spirit than a fly, Maurice Middleton. If you were my daughter, I should not mind. We expect women to be weak, cowardly and hesitating, but in a man, and a strong young fellow like you—bah! I am ashamed of my son."

The tone was one of deep disgust, and it was scarcely strange the listener's cheek flushed beneath it. Nevertheless, the young man answered calmly: "I beg your pardon, father, but you have no right to apply either of those epithets to me. Wait until circumstances have tried me, before you call me weak or cowardly."

"But you have no ambition. See how you would drop out of this affair, would relinquish this suit. I can scarcely drive you into it," returned the father, Mr. John Middleton, a sharp-featured, wiry-framed little man, who was snapping the blade of his pen-knife to and fro, and moving uneasily in his seat.

"That is true. I don't exactly know why, but I have taken a great antipathy to the whole affair. Why should we three men set ourselves to hunting and scraping up evidence of dead and gone people, to deprive of a property they have possessed all their lives a feeble old man, and a delicate, refined young lady? If my mother were alive, or we had sisters, it would be different. There would seem to be then some show of justice. But for three men like you, Felix and myself, I confess I can't make it seem anything but abominable."

"Foolish boy! Won't you and Felix marry, and then where is the fine fortune you will need to come from?"

The clear, ingenuous face sparkled over with a mischievous smile, and the manly shoulders were shrugged impatiently.

"Time enough to think of that, father, when Felix or I have received any hint of such a destiny."

"And you would let this great fortune, which was my father's right, slip away from us. I have no patience with you, Maurice. It is time you threw aside these absurd dreams of yours, and became a practical man, alive to the duties of the day and hour. I shall no longer humour your vagaries. You must be more of a man, or I shall disown you."

"Disinherit me from this Wainwright fortune, you mean. I am willing."

"Thank heaven Felix has some sense. You do

[THE MIDDLETONS IN COUNCIL.]

not find Felix talking in this fashion. He urges me to bring forward all possible convincing testimony."

"Why don't Felix come and attend to the business himself? I'm sure I don't understand his movements at all. He has never taken us to his residence, or his place of business, since we have arrived in the town. We know nothing whatever of his actions, and when he comes to us, I declare it seems to me as if he is all the time afraid he will be seen by some one. I must own, father, that these three years of absence have not improved Felix, according to my mind. He looks like a man about something of which he is ashamed."

"Another of your absurdities," was the elder gentleman's angry retort. "Felix understands what he is about, and I am fully acquainted with his affairs. So you may set your mind at rest there. I only wish I were half as well satisfied with your behaviour."

The handsome, clear-eyed young fellow shrugged his shoulders, and gave a comical grimace.

"I wish, then, you would put this obnoxious affair into the hands of Felix. It is more to his taste you admit, then why not give him the management?"

"Felix really does have the management," answered Mr. Middleton, meditatively, "only he does not like to have it appear so. He does not want them to mistrust yet that he has any connection with us."

"Ha!" exclaimed Maurice, "so my vague conjectures prove true. Mr. Felix Middleton does not wish it known that his father and brother are in town. Humph! I trust my affairs will never be in such a 'satisfactory' state that I am ashamed to own my relatives. I am sure I shall never be willing to compromise my own honour so much, as to be willing to take any management which cannot be known to all the world."

"Absurd, quixotic boy! I cannot imagine how you came to be so unlike your brother, nor where you acquired such weak and silly ideas."

The soft hazel eye assumed a sudden flash, the lip curled haughtily.

"Father, father, let me always keep such weakness and silliness. Mayhap the time will come when I can show you what is true strength and wisdom, mayhap you will be able to test your two sons, and find out which is wanting. Mayhap—"

But here he broke off with a light laugh, and shook away the sudden fire of emotion which had come over him.

"Pshaw! It is absurd in me to quarrel about this thing. We might talk for ever, and neither could change the other's views. You know I have my own plans for the future, and that I deferred them,

to come and assist you here according to your earnest request. Upon my word, father, I think I have got beyond my usefulness here. That old man is a villain, and will play you false, take my word for it."

"Let him be a villain, it does not matter to me, so that I get this testimony out of him," was the crusty reply.

"But what is a villain's testimony worth? I tell you he has a sardonic smile which assures me he means to turn upon you in some way."

"How can he do that? Let him but give his testimony on oath, that Gustavus Wainwright took the name of Augustus Middleton when he married Captain Robert's daughter, that the ceremony was a legal one, and he may turn as much, and as often, as he pleases. I shall be safely established then as the heir of the Wainwright property."

"And that poor old man—and the young lady," said Maurice Middleton, sorrowfully. "Father, father, what do we three men want with riches? Leave the poor Wainwrights undisturbed, I beg of you."

"Right is right. Why should I be defrauded of my father's due? And you may spare your sympathy for the young lady. Felix will look after her welfare. He seems very much in love with her."

"And here he comes. I will leave you to discuss the subject, for I presume the conversation will entirely concern the case of *Middleton v. Wainwright*, and I will spare him any trepidation on my account."

As he spoke, he crossed the room towards a door opposite that upon whose threshold appeared a rather fine-looking, well-dressed gentleman, some half a dozen years older than Maurice.

The elder Mr. Middleton advanced to meet the new-comer with a smile of eager welcome.

"So you have come again, Felix, I am thankful to see you. I want to ask your advice about this Mathew Merle. He is rather hard to manage, and demands an extravagant price, besides threatening to walk over to the other party."

"I know—I know," said Felix, snapping angrily a pair of rather small, but piercing gray eyes. "I doubted your ability to cope with him, and I went to see him myself. He is as wily as an old fox, and took care not to commit himself in any way. But he means mischief."

"I have been telling my father the same thing," observed Maurice, still with his hand on the door. "You'd better help me out with the rest of the advice. I tell him to drop the case."

"Drop the case, indeed!" exclaimed Felix, evidently glad of an opportunity to vent the ill-humour which had been growing within him. "I should ex-

pect just such ridiculous advice from a spiritless coward like you."

"Take care, Felix," exclaimed his brother, a flush rising hastily to his forehead, "you mistake my character altogether, if you think I am cowardly enough to submit to your insulting language. These three years of absence have weaned me from the old-time slavish submission to your tyrannical temper. I am a man myself now. You can say no more than that, and we both alike wait the test of experience to prove our worth and ability. I say again, I do not like this case, though I have no doubt the right is on my father's side. Why must we cajole, wheedle, and bribe that old reprobate? I would strect him and compel his testimony."

"I should like to see the power that could compel an unwilling witness at our courts to speak the testimony required, when there is not another soul to corroborate or impeach his assertions," answered Felix, with a sneer. "And as regards your having grown to be a man, I should like to see it proved by something more satisfactory than your own assertions. You think our cause is right, and you would give it up tamely. Very mature judgment truly!"

Maurice Middleton's cheek grew hotter still.

"I would not take away their whole subsistence from a failing old man and a helpless young woman. I have method enough for that."

Felix turned upon him with a still fiercer glare.

"Ah, I fathom the cause of this chivalrous conduct. You have seen Octavia Wainwright; you have fallen in love with her. But I warn you—"

He paused, fairly choked by his indignation from further speech.

Maurice smiled disdainfully.

"Spare yourself any uneasiness, Felix," said he; "I have neither seen Miss Wainwright, nor cherish any intention of seeking her out. But your jealousy confirms my previous suspicions. You care about the success of my father's claim most of all, because it will give you a hold upon a lady who has rejected your proffered love."

It was evident this random arrow struck home. Felix's thin face turned to a sickly greenish pallor.

"By St. George! Maurice Middleton, you shall repent that speech," cried he, hoarsely.

Maurice laughed softly.

"Come, come, you were always quarrelling," interposed their father anxiously; "do be quiet a little while, I beg of you. Maurice, I wish you would see after that draft."

"Yes, sir. I'll go out of the way with the utmost alacrity, Adieu, Don Felix."

The light mocking echoes of his laugh lingered a moment after the door closed behind him.

Felix ground down a malediction.

"Father," said he, "I always disliked that boy. He has none of our blood in him."

"I know it," was the deprecating reply. "Apart from looks one would know he and you had different mothers. But he is my son, and your half-brother, and in his own line we must give him credit for shrewdness and ability. He has earned his full share of the family income, though he keeps his absurd, quixotic notions, in spite of my lectures. But now let us talk of business. So you have seen old Mathew Merle yourself?"

Felix knit his forehead again.

"Yes, I have seen him. A wily old fox, that is what he is, and you must set a watch upon him, or he will slip away, without having given the testimony we need. I wish he could be trapped somehow into making his statements before a witness. That would be better than to have him in the witness-box."

"How can that be? I don't understand."

"Why in that case we should have just the testimony we desire, and no more."

"Do you think there is anything he could say to damage us?" asked the elder Mr. Middleton with a startled look.

"I don't care to give expression to all my thoughts," was the rather ambiguous answer of Mr. Felix.

His father stood twirling nervously at the seal on his watch chain, now and then raising his eyes, and glancing uneasily at the moody face before him.

"I can't see a possibility of harm in his power, except from withholding the testimony," ventured he.

"I wish I couldn't," returned Felix. "However, the thing is to put it out of the man's power to do harm. I think you agree with me that the affair must go on now, at any cost."

"Certainly, certainly," replied the senior with decided emphasis.

"Yes," repeated Felix, clenching the hands thrust under the skirts of his coat, and setting his teeth till they left their imprint in the bloodless lip, "it shall go on—no obstacle shall hinder now."

"I wish I knew what danger you have discovered, Felix."

"It is only a suspicion as yet, and oddly enough Octavia Wainwright was the first to suggest it to me. That girl has been to see old Merle. There was never another such a woman as she is. Judge of my surprise when she said gravely, this very evening, in talking over the case with her father—I took care to be near enough to hear every word. 'I am not afraid of what the Middletons can do, father. Their witness of theirs will ruin their case for them. He tried to cheat me also, but I read plainly he held another game in reserve. If they are keen and sagacious, they will never bring him to the witness-box.' This was what she said in that grave, sedate way of hers."

"I do not see yet," said Mr. Middleton, bewildered.

"Nor should I, if I had not watched her movements. What a queen she would make with her brilliant genius, her subtle penetration, and indomitable energy!" he added in an eager voice. "When she has married me, and the two causes are united, like the rival roses, I will defy all the other claims which may arise."

"Why don't you marry her then as soon as possible?"

Mr. Felix bit his lip again.

"Octavia Wainwright is not a common woman, sir. She will not be won in the tame, everyday style. I make my moves cautiously, and only after due reflection. The next time I lay my suit before her, she will answer less haughtily at least."

"The next time," repeated his father. "So Maurice was right, she has refused you once."

A sullen, angry red came into the face of Felix.

"I trust, sir, what I say to you confidentially, is not to be repeated to that boy."

"Of course not. You are both ready enough to quarrel without my help. But, Felix, I am anxious to know what danger can threaten our case."

His son bent from his tall height, and whispered a single sentence.

But a cannon at his ear could not have shocked him more. Mr. John Middleton staggered back, turned deadly pale, and grasping at a chair, to support himself, faltered:

"No, no, Felix. That is impossible."

"I tell you, sir, it is coming to light sure as fate, unless we stop it. It was a miserable mistake getting this Mathew Merle over here. He must not give in his evidence himself."

"No, he must not. But how can it be helped?"

"Leave it to me, sir. Octavia Wainwright was right when she said the Middletons would take care of Mathew Merle."

Father and son grasped hands, looking into each other's faces with fiercely burning eyes. Look and gesture meant more than any speech of the tongue. And then they parted.

CHAPTER IV.

THE Sea Foam had gained the Channel, and the white cliffs of the English shore were dwindling into mere specks. The sails filled out, and laying over a little on one side, the gallant vessel ploughed through the white-crested waves, as though impelled by a living force within itself.

The mate walked the deck, casting a satisfied glance now and then up at the sails, and again looking back towards the shore with a seaman's appreciation of the breeze, which was hurrying them away from it.

The sailors were exchanging smiling glances, or light jests, in good humour with all the world: "This is a spanking breeze, now, I tell you, Jack." "And don't she walk away like a beauty? I tell you, my hearty, this is the prettiest craft you've ever set foot on, whether you know it or not."

The captain of the Sea Foam, however, though he was seaman enough to appreciate a snug sailor and a favourable wind, had the gravest face on board. He walked backwards and forwards along the after deck with his hands behind him, his eyes downcast, not speaking except when giving the necessary orders for the management of the ship, and then in a voice lacking its accustomed heartiness, so that his officers were quite puzzled, and the old hands among the crew opened their eyes, wondering whatever it could be that had come over the "smartest, jolliest cap'n that ever a poor tar sailed under."

The truth was Captain Leyard knew that the time was swiftly approaching when he must face his passenger, and the paroxysm, whether of anger, terror, or distress, which would naturally result from the discovery of his extraordinary situation. The lad had been lying, all this time, in a profound sleep. He had roused him twice to give him a cup of coffee, hoping it would dispel the lethargy, but though it had been taken eagerly, the eyes scarcely opened, and the head had dropped again heavily. The last time, however, that Captain Leyard had looked at him,

he saw plainly that the power of the narcotic was passing away, and consciousness returning. He was very positive that his next visit would find his passenger awake and in his right mind. It was the dread of this meeting, and the leaden weight of his conscience, which destroyed the usual light-hearted good-nature of the skipper of the Sea Foam. And yet, for all this dread, a subtle fascination drew him down into the cabin. And presently, after a careful glance, which took in the distant shore, the set of the sails, and the forward track, he turned towards the companion way, and went down into the cabin.

His passenger's state-room door was open, and Captain Leyard was thus made aware that the lad had risen from the berth, and he was not in the least surprised to find the slight figure standing in the middle of the little state-room. A pair of large, wistful, melancholy brown eyes, darkened a little by an expression of startled perplexity, were fixed inquiringly upon his.

Captain Leyard wished the staunch, solid plank under his feet would give way and let him down out of sight, even though it plunged him into the chilling depths beneath.

He coughed rather nervously and stammered:

"You are better. I am glad to see that you have recovered consciousness."

"Are you the master here? I judge I am on board some vessel. Will you tell me what one, and where bound?"

"It is the Sea Foam, bound to the East Indies, and I am Captain Leyard."

"To the East Indies. Then it will be easy for me to reach Calcutta. I was born in Calcutta."

Captain Leyard swallowed down the lump in his throat which was nearly choking him.

"Indeed. So I may judge this is not your first voyage. Fray sit down, you are weak, and you must be half famished. I will tell the steward to bring you the broth I ordered to be in readiness for your waking."

"How long have I slept, and who brought me here?" asked the boy, dropping listlessly into the seat towards which Captain Leyard motioned him. His calmness delighted the latter.

"Thank heaven I am to be spared any alarm and distress," thought he; "after all my passenger is not so unwilling."

And he answered with more animation:

"It is a very strange affair, my boy. If you can explain it all to me, my curiosity will be very much relieved. A stranger, muffled up in a cloak, with a long, heavy beard and moustache, came and engaged a passage, and said you would be brought on board when we reached the mouth of the river. Sure enough, just as the tug boat left us, and we were ready to stand out into the Channel, a boat came alongside, in all the mist and darkness, and you were handed up to me, seeming to be in a profound sleep. I brought you down to the cabin, and when I returned on deck the boat had gone. Two trunks were put on board for you. Am I to understand that you are ignorant of this, or repugnant to the voyage?"

"I don't know whether I am glad or sorry," answered the lad slowly, resting his head against the cabin wall, and half closing his eyes, "but I am certainly at a loss to know what it means. I remember rather indistinctly, but the last impression I have is of being in a lodging-house in London, drinking a cup of coffee the landlady brought to me."

"It was drugged. You have evidently been under the effects of a powerful narcotic," observed the captain, indignation in his voice and look.

"I suppose so, that I might be brought to your ship. But it is very strange," returned he, passing his hand across his forehead.

"I would not ponder over it now. You say you don't know whether to be glad or sorry. I advise you to decide to be glad—to try to make the best of the circumstances, and be as happy as possible under them. I assure you I will do my best to make you comfortable."

The large brown eyes were raised again. Captain Leyard found it hard to sit composed under their silent scrutiny, and it was like a knife stab when the tremulous voice said trustfully:

"Thank you, sir, I am sure you will. Your face tells me I may find a friend in you."

And then the eyes fell again, the head drooped to the supporting hand, and Captain Leyard's passenger fell into a deep reverie.

"You shall have the broth now, and some toast and a cup of coffee, and then you will feel like another person."

"Not coffee," said the boy hastily, with a look of disquiet.

"Well, tea then. But you must really take some nourishment."

And Captain Leyard hastened out to the galley, to

attend to the master himself, instead of trusting either steward or cook, trying to soften the sting of his accusing conscience by these little attentions.

As soon as he was gone, the boy put his hand into his pocket and drew forth the letter he had found there, with a purse containing a generous sum of gold, when he first awoke to a realization of his situation.

The handwriting was bold and firm, the letter bore no date, had no signature, but contained these lines:

"You avow yourself well nigh driven to despair by the misery and cruelty of the circumstances which surround you. I heard you, only a few days ago, cry out in very agony of passionate grief, 'Oh, if I could fly anywhere—change lives and destinies with anyone, only to escape the recognition of my persecutors, my gaolers, my despotic masters.' Such passionate demands are almost always answered. The realization for you comes still more promptly. Behold, when you will read this, you will find yourself in changed circumstances, bound by none of the letters you detest, freed from the evils which threatened you. Make your own circumstances now, choose your path freely. Your disappearance from London will be a mystery which even Mathew Merle's craft cannot fathom. If you choose, your past, your identity, can be wiped out so completely, that your enemies cannot track you out, for though it will be obviously necessary for you to avoid England, and shun India, the world is wide and holds many pleasant scenes and happy lands. This is written by one upon whose face you have never looked, whose identity you will never know, who is not so much of a hypocrite as to pretend to be doing this out of friendship to you, but to foil the wicked plans of Mathew Merle."

"Another mystery," sighed the youth, "another of the inexplicable tangles which coil around me—another current bearing me on, a powerless agent, drifting whither its impetus bears me."

The graceful head dropped again to the clasping hands, and the eyes were full of melancholy. It was raised, however, presently, a hopeful gleam darkening over the face.

"Well, I must accept the situation, that is positive. And why not, as the good captain suggests, be happy over it? The unknown writer is right; it is possible for me to make my own future now. If I have escaped from my guardian's knowledge when this voyage is ended, and I stray into some pleasant home, why may I not find independence and happiness? Just now I seem hardly to have energy and spirit to face anything. But it will be different in a little time. And it ought to be happiness to have escaped from them. I remember well how I broke forth that evening in my great distress after my guardian's visit. How I wished myself anywhere—in a lonely desert—on a trackless ocean. This is far better than either. If I can read a face correctly, this Captain Leyard is a kind and gentlemanly man. He can help me, he will be kind to me. Indeed, indeed, I will seek to be happy!"

These reflections were interrupted by the entrance of the captain, followed by the steward with a tray in his arms.

The youthful passenger could but smile to see the array of delicacies brought out from the lockers. Captain Leyard himself arranged the table, and sat down opposite, watching with delight the zest with which his guest approached them.

"Well," said he, smilingly, "you are not so very unhappy."

"No, sir. I have resigned myself to the situation, and mean to make the best of what after all is not so very bad. I am fond of the sea."

"You must come on deck. We have a pleasant breeze, and are slipping along at a famous rate," returned the captain, growing more and more relieved.

"I will come presently. I should like to look at my trunk. You said one was brought with me, and this key in my pocket, I presume, unlocks it?"

"Yes, to be sure. It was stowed away in that locker there under your berth. Well, come to the deck when you are ready. It will bring more colour to your cheek, this cool breeze. You are awfully pale, but then it is that narcotic. In another day you will be all right. But, by the way, you haven't told me your name."

The face was not pale; but the moment the lad answered, a scarlet flush passed over it even to the temples, though it faded a moment after.

"The unknown visitor who paid my passage should have provided me with a name also," answered he, with a touch of bitterness in the tone. "He seems to have decided so much, he might as well have finished it all. Possibly he could have found a more lucky one than mine has been, but it is at your service—Will Yarrel, sir."

"Well, Master Will, I shall be happy to see you on

deck presently. Now I will leave you to examine your trunk. I trust you will find in it everything you desire; if not, my store is at your service."

As he spoke the captain left the inner cabin, and went out through the other one, in which was the table for the under officers, and their berths.

Will Yarrel took the key from his pocket, and went into the state-room. He pulled out the trunk, unlocked it hastily, and opened the lid. A suit of boy's clothing met his eye at its first glance. It was entirely new. A bitter smile curled the lad's lip as he flung it out upon the floor and searched deeper, examining every article with close scrutiny. There was everything needed for the toilet of a gentleman, abundance of clothing, a dressing-case, writing-desk, a table book-rack filled with books, even a pair of worked slippers. Everything was new, unsoiled, fresh from the dealer's shop.

Will Yarrel removed every article from the trunk, littering the floor around him. When he came to a common, rather clumsy, and well-worn Bible, he uttered an exclamation of joy, and took it fondly in his hands. But his eye flashed indignantly as he opened the leather cover. The blank leaves had been ruthlessly torn away.

"My father's handwriting! all that I possessed as a memento of my mother's married life, taken away from me! Shameful, cruel, wicked!" ejaculated he. Then the hand dropped listlessly over the Bible, and the great, mournful eyes deepened to the blackness of mingled terror and melancholy.

"What is this mystery that has followed me ever since I have been able to notice and realize?" murmured he. "Why can I not pierce it, seize upon its meaning? How fondly I have dreamed over it, have fancied that my locket would some time or other discover it to me. And yet I am continually baffled."

He stopped abruptly, and put his hand under the collar around his neck.

An exclamation of dismay and grief announced the discovery of some great loss.

"They have taken off the chain; they have stolen my chain and locket. Oh, I have lost the only clue to my true name and parentage," he cried.

He then began examining everything anew, shaking every article, exploring the pockets, turning out the contents of every box. In vain! The mutilated Bible was the only link left him, to prove anything concerning his past life.

He thrust back the contents of the trunk, closed the lid hastily, and pushed it back into the locker. Then he went out into the cabin, and sitting down by the table, laid his head upon his extended arms. His cheek was very pale, his eyes troubled, and his voice trembled as he murmured:

"I am, indeed, a lonely, helpless waif, drifting out upon an unknown ocean, without chart or compass of my own."

Poor Will Yarrel! And he did not guess the solution which weighed so heavily on Captain Leyard's mind. He had not the faintest presentiment of the lonely, deserted ocean isle.

(To be continued.)

anxiety had now given place to wishes for something unknown; the good people began to speculate; nothing went on as formerly; godless thoughts of change, and longings for something better succeeded; they went to districts where fruits no longer dropped into their mouths; where the air played coldly over their unclad bodies; with the increasing number of their family came the care of providing for them: in a word, misery had entered, their paradise had vanished, and a state of society, with all its requirements, had begun. Yet paradise still exists in all its pristine beauty, blooming in the forests of the magnificent tropics. Man alone has overstepped his bounds, and has plunged into the strife of the elements, into the feverish life of human passions; he has closed the door of untroubled peace behind him, and now wanders restlessly on, perpetually at warfare with himself and his fellows.—*Recollections of My Life. By Maximilian I., Emperor of Mexico.*

FRUIT AND OYSTERS.

A CORRESPONDENT says:—"I am not quite sure whether fruit is always brought to us as it should be. Pears and apples no doubt bear careful carriage, and, however suddenly they may ripen at last, are often a long time reaching the perfection of maturity, even after they have been gathered; but there is an essence which belongs to most fruit, and which begins to vanish the moment it is plucked. Even the short transfer from the garden-wall to the dish at dessert cannot be made without the loss of some of that subtle flavour which is conveyed by the living stalk from the sun-fed tree."

"Fruit should be eaten alive, like oysters. There is an edge to the taste of a fresh-opened oyster, which comes, I suppose, from the surprise he feels at being suddenly scooped out of his shell. In a few minutes, this gives place to a feeling of alarm; and then, in an hour or two, to one of despair. When he is laid out with his brethren in a dish, the whole brood is hopeless and sad. They may still taste of life, but it is of life disappointed. But the fresh-opened oyster has no time to grow feverish or melancholy. He is caught in a state of serene unconsciousness of sorrow. He has a sound mind in a sound body, and is therefore wholesome and nice. Allow him to reflect before his dissolution, and the brightness of his spirit is gone. But the quick operation of detaching him from his shell sends a spasm through his being, which startles all the latent excellence he may possess into sudden and unique perfection. If eaten at this crisis of his healthful powers, he conveys all the gratification which an oyster is capable of giving to the superior animal, man."

"So, analogously, I believe, is it in eating fruit. It must be eaten alive, before the reaction begins to set in from its severance from the life-carrying stem. While a plum, for example, hangs upon its stalk, it is in some kind of magnetic correspondence with all the powers of nature: it shares the life of the earth and the sky; it has sunshine in its veins, and dew in its cells. Cut it off, and in time it dies, corrupt, unwholesome; and every moment in its progress from life to death is marked by a decadence of that essence which makes fruit delicious. Therefore, supposing that you pluck it ripe, the sooner a plum is eaten the better for you. This, of course, applies the most to tender, thin-skinned fruit. A firm apple dies slowly. A nut holds out long against the debasing influence of separation from its source of life. But plums, figs, peaches, apricots, and strawberries begin to suffer directly they are gathered. This is the case even with pines, which are susceptible of bruises, but they contain such an apparent surplausage of flavour, that the first stages of their decay are not perceived, except by a cunning palate."

"I think the morning is the best time for fruit; I am not quite sure, though. The afternoon is good. But I don't recommend fruit with the dew on it. Let the fruit get its own breakfast before you eat it yourself. It breakfasts on early sunshine and dew. It takes these good things in, and smiles upon itself and the world, just as you do half an hour after a pleasant breakfast. Eat it while it is in this humour, by no means in the raw and early morning; thus you have the young freshness and virgin flavour of the fruit. It has another character later in the day, when it is filled with sunshine; then, I think, it is sweeter. It does not express, perhaps, the same exquisite accuracy of characteristic flavour, but its capacity for richness is then at its fullest stretch. Its pulp is not less juicy, though it is more general than special in its character; and, moreover, it impresses you with a sense of the contrast between the dry weary air of the day and the reserve of freshness latent in the hanging plum."

A SKETCH AT TENERIFFE.—This was no Spanish fonda, with its airy courtyard, with its fountain, its little balcony, and cheerful apartments. Yet

all this might have been overcome, but not the repulsive face of the mother of the family—mother is truly an improper expression, for nothing human ever could have been nourished by her withered breast; we might more appropriately term her the house-dragon. A small, parched-up, high-shouldered body supported a head, with a peaked nose which would have done honour to the beak of a bittern, and from this nose depended worn-out looking spectacles, whose frame, bound round by a string, a large white handkerchief held upon her head, which was thinly covered with hair. But the perfection of this vision of dark dreams, this bundle of horrors, lay in the squinting looks cast over the spectacles, which contributed decidedly to her advantage in house-keeping: for whosoever looked at these differing eyes, his appetite sank to nothing; he paid forthwith and fled the table. In this personage fate showed herself provokingly insulting; for she was the owner of the solitary funds, and no stranger could escape from her dominions. The painter had the misfortune to meet her at night in the dark passage; he believed himself not yet freed from the burden of an evil dream, and mistook the approaching form for a snorting steamer; for one eye was of poisonous green, the other glowed fiery red like the lanterns on the paddleboxes of a steamer.—*Recollections of My Life.* By Maximilian I., Emperor of Mexico.

THE WITCH FINDER.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The corporal's return to Salem was like a triumphal march, his mind at rest concerning the safety of his charges.

Continuing his way to his cabin, he unlocked his humbled door, muttering:

"No more lonely greatness for me. This little house is more suitable to my present bachelor condition. Should I ever marry—and it is possible I may during the next fifteen years—I will remove to the Rogers's House."

He entered his sitting-room at once. A fire was smouldering on the hearth, and before it, basking in the warmth, lay Bruno and Tabby, the pets of Philip and Hester.

The bear looked up lazily at the entrance of Trueaxe, blinking his eyes sleepily, and the cat stared a moment, and then drooped her head in feline slumber.

"A pleasant domestic picture," observed the corporal.

He reached down his great, russet-covered bible from its shelf, deposited it on the table, drew up his tall, straight-backed chair, donned his spectacles, and sat down to a study of the case which had so deeply interested him.

His mind being fully relieved of all anxiety with regard to his charges, or of Philip and Mr. Waybrook, he engaged in his new pursuit with great ardour.

The passage he sought refused to be found.

"Dear, deary me!" he ejaculated, at last. "I never saw nothing like it. I'd give something to find a person who knows the story, or could tell me where to look for it. I've a good mind to go up to Judge Stoughton's on the chance of seeing Mr. Mather. What's that?" he added, interrupting himself, and looking towards the door. "It's about time that Boardbush was coming along after searching the church. I presume it's him. Yes, it is!" he concluded, coolly, as his gate swung violently on its hinges, and a hasty, passionate tread approached his door.

A quick, angry knock sounded on the door, the latch was turned abruptly, and Boardbush thrust his evil-looking face through the aperture.

"Come in, Mr. Witch Finder," said Trueaxe, in a quiet voice, looking over his spectacles at the intruder. "You're the very man I was hankering to see."

Boardbush was not a little puzzled by this address, as well as by all the mysterious circumstances which were coming to his notice, and for an instant he was tempted to refuse the old corporal's invitation. His adventure at the Rogers's dwelling had made him wary. He looked around the room sharply. Evidently, the old soldier was alone, the bear and the cat affording no grounds for fear. Nothing could be more peaceable than the appearance of Trueaxe, his great bible lying before him on the table, his countenance grave and studious, his manner puzzled. The intruder was half-ashamed of his distrust.

"Walk in and take a chair. You can doubtless spare a few minutes, and I want you to help me."

The Witch Finder looked searchingly around the room, but seeing nothing, hearing nothing, to warrant

a suspicion of any nature, he settled himself into his chair and replied:

"What can I do for you?"

"You can help me decide a few points of scripture," declared Trueaxe, flourishing his book, which Boardbush now saw was a bible. "First, was the Witch of Endor a real she-woman, or was she a make-believe, just to cheat King Saul?"

The visitor moved so uneasily that the corporal paused in his remarks.

"You're full of your witches, I see," said Boardbush, impatiently. " Didn't I converse with you enough the other evening on this subject?"

"Yes, just enough to raise my curiosity. Second, when Saul saw the Witch of Endor, was he in a proper state of mind?"

Boardbush drew himself up scornfully:

"I want you to answer me a few questions. I am looking for certain parties who have fled from justice, and am here to make certain inquiries. Have the goodness, therefore, to tell me—"

"You're a wasting your powder, Mr. Witch Finder," interrupted Trueaxe, with a firmness that astonished his visitor.

Boardbush looked at his tormentor impatiently. He had just come from a search of the steeple-church, and was in no mood for the arguments of Trueaxe, upon what he deemed a trivial subject. With a feeling of exasperation he said:

"I'll tell you why I came here. I had reason to suppose that Hester Waybrook and her mother were hidden in the loft of the steeple-church. I have been there to-night, in the exercise of my duty, to search for her. I found a blanket or two, and some remnants of food in the loft, showing that our bird had been there. You must have hidden her up there. Now where is she?"

"How should I know?" asked Trueaxe, with apparent innocence. "You say the girl and her mother are witches. Perhaps then they flew up out of the belfry."

"Don't be a simpleton!" said Boardbush, testily. "They are in this house!"

He laid down his book, arose, and took up his candle.

The Witch Finder looked at him narrowly, suspecting a trap of some sort, but the corporal's face was so honest and guileless that he bade him lead on, saying that he had friends outside.

The tour of the little dwelling was made, and the Witch Finder was convinced that Hester had not found refuge there. His rage may be imagined. When talking with Trueaxe, he had believed his prey within his reach. Now he felt as if he could crush the old soldier and Hester together remorselessly, so great was his sense of disappointment.

"Not here!" he said, when they returned to the sitting-room. "I will find her, I swear it. I'll turn Salem upside down before I'll let her escape me thus!"

The Witch Finder bestowed a look as black as night upon the corporal, and dashed from the house, slamming the door behind him with such force that the dwelling shook to its foundations.

The sloop had not made thrice her length from the Western Wave, after the capture of Philip and the scuttling of the ship, when Mr. Waybrook began to recover his senses. He stirred feebly, opening his eyes to the glittering moonlight with a dazed and vacant expression, murmuring faintly:

"Philip are you there?"

There was a faint stir at his feet, a broken ejaculation of thankfulness, and then the voice of old Butler answered:

"Heaven be praised, sir, that you are alive! I thought I was alone here, a-sinking into the waters."

"Philip—where is he?"

"He's been carried off, sir, by them pirates as have just left us for dead!"

"Philip gone!" groaned Mr. Waybrook, struggling to obtain an upright position, in which effort he succeeded after much difficulty. "How my head swims! Butler, are you injured seriously?"

"I don't know, sir," was the response. "My arm seems paralyzed."

"They have left us to our fate," he said, with a faint, irrepressible moan. "They think we are dead, and have left us to drift about at the mercy of the winds and the waves—"

"Let us bind each other's wounds, Butler. Let us now think of ourselves, not of our remorseless enemy."

The suggestion was acted upon at once, although the men were both so feeble and full of pain that to stir was absolute torture. Butler examined the wounds of the merchant, and bound them up with a handkerchief, and Mr. Waybrook reciprocated the kindness.

"I feel better now," announced Butler, when it

had been discovered that his wounds were not serious.

"The others are all dead, are they not, Butler?" he asked, turning his gaze upon the three prostrate figures, whose upturned faces looked ghastly in the moonlight.

"Poor lads! They met their fate like men. How they fought, Mr. Waybrook! We shall all go down together soon, I suppose, the living and the dead. Ah! Bill Kinward stirs? John Waldron breathes! They are not dead, sir—only stunned, as we were."

He moved towards his comrades with frantic eagerness, applied his ear to their chests, to make sure that he had not deceived himself, and then began to chafe their hands, and call upon them to arouse.

The combined efforts of the two men were eventually crowned with success.

The three sailors recovered their senses, and a portion of their former strength. Their wounds were examined and bound up, and they were soon able to walk the deck.

"Is there no way of escape, Butler?" asked the elder Waldron, when the old seaman had returned to the little group. "I see the boats are gone, but are you sure we're sinking? The ship don't seem to settle, but just lays here and rocks."

Mr. Waybrook had sorrows beyond those of his companions. His wife and daughter would be left unprotected, now that he and Philip were both removed from the Witch Finder's path. What might they not endure? Persecutions, anguish, and terrors.

The night of mental agony and physical suffering wore slowly on.

The morning dawned at last—cold, gray and cheerless. The sea, with its dull-hued waters and angry foaming waves, seemed like a monster ready to devour its prey. But, presently, the sun arose from above the waters, bright, clear, and pleasant, and its coming brought hope to the men's hearts.

"We are not gone down yet," said James Waldron, with growing cheerfulness. "Perhaps Providence has in some way interposed in our favour. I can't see that the ship is settling."

"Nor can I," said Bill Kinward.

"Let us have some breakfast," said Butler, "and then examine into the ship's condition. We are all too weak to do anything before taking food."

This proposition met with acceptance.

"I'll go down and examine the ship," he said, "but, in my opinion, it's no use hoping. John Waldron will come with me, and we'll soon know our exact situation."

They were absent a long time, returning at last with somewhat lightened faces.

"There's water in the hold, Mr. Waybrook," Butler reported, "but no more than we can get rid of with the pumps. The ship is scuttled, sure enough, but the men who did it were in such a hurry and so awkward that they did not do it thoroughly. There are several holes through the side, air, but the pieces of wood on the outside, that were expected to break off, are pressed against the holes by the heavy weight of water, almost completely stopping the most of them up."

"Since such is the case," declared the merchant, "let us all set about our task, and use every effort to save our lives. The very wind is against us, to be sure, but if we perish, let it not be from cowardice or inaction."

The day proved to be one of those brilliant winter days, when the sun shines but the cold is nevertheless intense, and the air seems full of knife-like icicles, cutting the flesh with savage fierceness.

With the night came a strong, fierce wind that soon proved to be a gale. It came off-shore, and swept them onward with a violence that soon became terrific. The moon showed itself only fitfully, and finally retired from view altogether behind a dense bank of clouds.

The wind arose at last so that conversation was an impossibility. The sullen roar of the waves, mingling with the screams of the wind, formed a combination of sounds absolutely appalling. Yet, suddenly mingling with it, came a sound more appalling still—a sudden crash that struck terror to all hearts. It was followed by a quiver of the vessel—a terrible shaking—as if she had fallen into the hands of a terrific monster.

"The mainmast has broken off," muttered the merchant to himself. "The water must be gaining fearfully upon us. We shall go down soon now!"

What sighs, and moans, and prayers, were borne from that deck by the howling winds, as the water-laden ship thus pitched and rolled in the midst of the wild billows!

Morning came again at last. The sun arose, as on the day previous, but its beams fell now upon a helpless, sinking wreck, upon whose deck crouched five haggard men, who looked onward with hollow, despairing eyes, praying that the end might be near.

"We have but an hour or two longer, at the most," said old Butler, with difficulty gaining his feet, and leaning against the taffrail. "The sea is setting down, and so are we, boys. We shall soon have a softer resting-place than a ship's deck. After all, it's been a pleasant world, boys—with more laughter than tears, more joy than sorrow, more happiness than misery. I've had my ups and downs of grief, I've been poor, and all my life I've worked hard, but life is well worth the having. It's hard to give it up!"

He dashed away his tears with his hand, and looked straight before him. As he did so, an incredulous expression appeared on his face, and he ejaculated, wildly:

"Merciful heaven! Can it be possible? My senses must be leaving me. It is a delusion and a snare. Look boys, look yonder, and tell me what you see!"

His excitement was like the shock of a galvanic battery to the others. They all arose, including Mr. Waybrook, and leaning against the bulwarks, gazed in the direction indicated.

What a sight it was that blessed their vision!

They saw approaching them from the east, still at some distance, two stately ships, upon whose white sails the sun gleamed vividly, touching them with a golden tinge.

Suddenly, Mr. Waybrook cried in great excitement:

"The ship this way looks like the Harbinger! But it cannot be her. They have not yet seen us. Up with a flag, Butler. Signal them, boys!"

Butler ran to the galley as quickly as his rigid limbs would permit, procured a table-cloth, returned and ascended with it to the top of the mizen-mast, to which he affixed it as a flag of distress.

"Pray heaven they may come in time," said Mr. Waybrook, in a hoarse and broken voice. "The wretched lurches—she is going down! Heaven hasten them to us!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

WHEN Boardbush quitted the dwelling of Trueaxe he proceeded gloomily to his own habitation upon the Pilot's Handle.

"How strangely that girl eludes me!" he muttered, darkly. "By Jove, if ever I do find her I'll bring her haughty spirit down! She shall pay for this, I swear it!"

He let himself into his house, lighted a candle, and sat down to think.

He arose, then made his way into the rear garden.

It was a small plot of ground, surrounded by a high stone wall, which extended entirely around the premises. In one corner of this garden was a kennel, in which was a dog.

It growled savagely at his approach, and struggled to break its chain, but at a word from him it became silent.

The Witch Finder advanced, loosened the end of the chain, and led the animal into the house, giving him food. As soon as the meal had been devoured, he took up the chain, and led the dog from the dwelling, taking his way rapidly towards the steeples-church.

"Here, Wolf," cried the Witch Finder, exhibiting to the quadruped one of the blankets, which was snuffed at eagerly. "Smell it, Wolf—good dog! Now find them!"

The dog continued to sniff at the blanket impatiently, until it was withdrawn, then an idea of his master's object seemed to occur to him, and he put his nose down to the floor, sniffing again, and set off down the stairs at a brisk trot.

Picking up the chain that Wolf might not escape him, Boardbush opened the door, and the four men passed out into the street.

In due course of time the pursuers gained the woods, the dog still leaping and tugging at its chain, leading them in the very path over which the fugitives had passed some hours previously.

Once or twice, the hound lost the trail in his great eagerness, and they were obliged to retrace their steps to some distance that he might recover it. An hour or more was lost in this manner, invaluable time, for the hours were wearing on towards the morning.

The pursuers made very slow progress now, the dog often pausing to sniff the ground with an uncertain air that greatly annoyed his master. The five miles which had been accomplished by the three women in such good time, had not fully been traversed by the men by the time the moon disappeared, and the darkness that precedes the dawn had settled upon the scene.

"How can women ever have walked so far and over a path like this?" asked Boardbush, incredulously. "It does not seem possible!"

"It's my opinion," said one of the men, "that they're the witches they're accused of being, and for

my part, boys, I'm going to stay where I am till it's light enough to see the way. I won't walk into no witch-traps!"

This sentiment was echoed by the man's superstitious companions.

"I'll go on alone, then," said Boardbush, angrily.

"Lead on, Wolf."

The dog obeyed, but the Witch Finder had not taken ten steps when a protruding branch from a tree brought him to an abrupt halt.

"There! My eye's out, or very near it!" he cried, savagely. "We shall have to wait, boys."

Morning came at last. The party set out again at once, the hound baying his delight at the renewed search.

They had gone but a little way, when suddenly a figure appeared at a little distance in an opening of the trees beside the path. It was the picturesque figure of an Indian woman, attired in a costume half way between the savage and the civilized.

As the reader may suspect, the Indian woman was Caratta.

The baying of the dog and the sound of voices had attracted her attention, and full of anxiety with regard to her guests, she had approached the path, betraying her presence.

Boardbush was the first to behold her.

"Hallo! you there!" he said, in his loud, coarse voice, with a menacing gesture. "Whose squaw are you? Where do you come from?"

Caratta made no reply.

"Answer me," continued the Witch Finder, harshly. "Have you seen two women hereabouts? They are witches escaped from Salem last night."

The Indian woman thrust out her tongue, touching it significantly, and then touched her ears, uttering a strange sound as she did so.

"Deaf and dumb!" interrupted one of the men. "She don't hear a word you say, Boardbush."

"Seems to me I've seen her before in the town," he said, "but I don't remember any deaf and dumb squaw."

Caratta did not appear desirous of enduring farther scrutiny, for even while Boardbush looked at her she disappeared like a shadow, flitting away through the trees like a creature of the morning mist.

"We may as well go on," said the Witch Finder, after conquering a disposition to pursue the Indian.

It was not long before they beheld a thin column of smoke ascending from a thicket of pines, and they took their way towards it, convinced by the dog's joy that the end of their journey was near.

The wigwam was speedily discovered, and the pursuers halted before it, excited and jubilant.

The four men advanced in a body to the door, three of them being superstitious enough to fear a trap of some sort. The Witch Finder kicked against the door, by way of warning, and then opened it.

The wigwam was vacant!

"They slept here!" he declared, with kindling face. "That is their breakfast. That Indian kept them here. She was no more deaf and dumb than I am. She has come here and warned them. They haven't got five minutes the start of us. After them, Wolf! After them, boys!"

"There's no use hunting farther, Boardbush," said the eldest of his three allies, shaking his head, ominously. "We won't get track of them women if we hunt here till doomsday."

The Witch Finder, who had been silent and thoughtful, turned angrily upon them at this juncture.

"Are you idiots and cowards?" he demanded. "You act like superstitious children. The women are not witches. As to their disappearance, it is simple enough."

"But why did not the dog track them?"

"That Indian was keen enough to kill the scent, that's all. I can't tell how she did it, but she must have rubbed their feet with something. Now, boys," he said, "I've got an idea where they are. Be cautious, and follow me!"

He crept down to the river bank, followed by his men, and looked intently up the stream. He had watched but few moments when he detected a man's figure on the opposite bank, at some distance nearer the river's source, apparently engaged as a spy or sentinel.

"There's the redskin now!" he whispered. "Come with me under cover of the trees. We've got them now!"

The four men crept cautiously along the bank, keeping close in the shadow of the trees. The dog had been left behind, and there was nothing to betray their movements.

In a few minutes they had gained a point exactly opposite to that at which the Witch Finder had held the Indian woman.

He led the way across the river, to the rock behind which the squaw had disappeared, his men keeping close behind him.

The projecting rock concealed a hollow fissure that almost deserved the name of cave.

Boardbush cautiously peered into it, his eyes blazing at the sight they encountered.

The four women, Mrs. Waybrook, Hester, Mistress Peabody, and Caratta, were sitting around a basket which was well filled with food.

He leaped into the cavern, glaring exultantly at the white and horrified faces that were turned upon him. His men sprang after him, their weapons in their hands, and completely blocked up the entrance. The Witch Finder had spoken truly—Hester was at last in his power!

(To be continued.)

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

ARTIFICIAL YEAST.—Place a quart of good strong yeast in a vessel, and cover it up warm until it has well worked and has a good head on it; then stir in sufficient maize meal or wheat meal to make it into a stiff dough, and flatten this out with the hands into cakes the size of the top of a tumbler or less. Lay these on a nice dry board or sieve and dry in the sun or over a fireplace, turning them every day until quite dry. If dried in the sun, they must be brought in every night, otherwise the damp will injure them. When dry, pack away in tins in a dry place, as the slightest moisture injures them. For use, mix one of these cakes in about a pint of warm water, and with it make a batter in the centre of your dish of flour, or set a sponge overnight, and proceed in the morning as usual with yeast bread. One cake will raise twelve pounds of flour.

GOLD INK.—Take some leaf gold and white honey, and grind them together upon a marble slab until the gold is reduced to an impalpable powder. The paste now formed is agitated in a large glass tumbler with soft water, which dissolves the honey, while the gold falls down to the bottom. The water is now poured off, and the gold washed until all the honey is removed; after which, the gold is dried and then suspended in a mucilage of gum arabic. It is now used for writing upon paper, and when it becomes dry, it may be burnished and rendered brilliant. Silver ink is prepared in the same manner, by substituting silver leaf for the gold. Gold is also obtained in powder by dissolving nitro-hydro-chloric acid (*aqua regia*), which is called the tetrachloride of gold. When crystallized, this is soluble in water, alcohol, and ether, and may be used for gold ink by adding a gum mucilage to the water or alcohol in which it is dissolved. Metallic writing fluids of different colours can be made by mixing bronze powders in gum mucilage.

CURIOS RIGHT.—The Comptroller of Her Majesty's Household has 904 a-year. This odd four pounds has a history. The Comptroller has an ancient right to the left wing of the fowl—or the loft wings of the fowls—on Her Majesty's table; but many years ago this curious right was commuted for 4 a-year.

A STORM IN A WINE DISTRICT.—A writer says:—"I have just witnessed a most distressing spectacle. Imagine to yourself two entire communes ruined. One, the commune of Disy, contains 730 inhabitants; the other, Champillon, 359. On the 20th of May, the inhabitants of these communes, who are nearly all vine-dressers, at two o'clock in the afternoon, were industriously pursuing their labours among the vines, showing leaves and bunches of grapes in more than usual abundance. Suddenly a storm arose which drove all to seek shelter, and in the course of a quarter of an hour not a single bunch of fruit remained on these two vineyards, comprising respectively 50 and 110 hectares. The hailstones were so numerous and so large that on the following day, notwithstanding 30 degrees (Reaumur) of heat, they could still be gathered in heaps."

REMARKABLE WILL.—Recently an old gentleman of very eccentric habits, Mr. John Youngusband, of Abbey Holme, Cumberland, died, and his will has proved to be of the most eccentric character. The Silloth Railway runs through part of his property, an arrangement to which he was passionately averse; and though years have elapsed since then, his bitterness was in no wise assuaged. In his will he leaves near 1000/- to a solicitor who opposed the making of the railway. The rest of his money he bequeaths to a comparative stranger, upon these conditions—that the legatee never speaks to one of the directors of the railway, that he never travels upon it, that he never sends cattle or other traffic by it; and should he violate any of these conditions, the estate reverts to the ordinary succession. To Mr. John Irving and the other directors of the Silloth line Mr. Youngusband has sarcastically bequeathed a farthing.

MICHEL-DEVER.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"WHAT is to become of me if mamma refuses to forgive me, and receive me again? I was mad just now, Miss Digby! pray forgive my hasty words, and try to forget them. I have been a great trouble to you, and I cannot see how I am ever to repay you, or rid you of the burden you have so kindly assumed. I must begin to think of some plan of life for myself, if Mrs. Courtney should cast me off as my husband has done. I am her god-child, and she may consider it her duty to protect me, but I have really no claim upon her after eloping from her roof as I did. She will be quite justified in refusing to receive me beneath it again."

Miss Digby took her hand, and tenderly caressing it, said:

"You are quite welcome to remain with me as long as you choose, my dear. You are no burden to me, I assure you, and I would cheerfully do more for you than I have been called upon to do. I am alone in the world, with sufficient fortune to render me perfectly independent, and it is my chief pleasure to assist the unfortunate. You will not be left unprovided for, and what is offered you by those who have so badly treated you, is justly yours. I have been anxious to tell you that Walter was not so base as to leave you without a sufficient support. Colonel Thorne will settle on you an annuity which will enable you to live."

The white lips of Claire unclosed to ask, with passionate emphasis :

"Do they think that I will be trodden in the dust, and then accept gold from them as a panacea for the heart they have broken—for the pride they have so bitterly humiliated?"

"But, Claire, this provision is legally yours. The law does not grant a divorce, without setting aside an allowance for the repudiated wife."

"It may be so, but I would sooner die of want than accept the means of living from them. I have one other resource that I had almost forgotten. I have a half-brother in France, who, I believe, is rich. My father thought that Armand treated him badly, but at the last, he was not unwilling that I should make an appeal to him if I found it necessary. Mrs. Courtney goes to France in the spring, and she will hardly refuse to let me be the companion of her voyage. I will throw myself on my brother's compassion, and afford him the chance to atone to me for the neglect with which he treated poor papa."

"But suppose M. Lapierre should refuse to receive you? An ungrateful son is not apt to make an affectionate brother."

"That may be; but I have an impression that the cause of the estrangement was not entirely with Armand. I will afford him the opportunity to justify himself at all events. I think I should like to live in France for the next five years. I could acquire accomplishments, and gain that grace and distinction of manner which is even more attractive than beauty."

"And when that is attained, Claire, what is to follow?" asked Miss Digby, gravely.

A flash of bitter sarcasm came over her face, as she replied:

"Those who wish to be good, are told to put on the whole armour of righteousness. My armour is to be won, and won for a different purpose. I intend to become bewitching, entrancing, bewildering—everything that is irresistible, and then—"

A brilliant flame glowed on her cheeks, her eyes blazed with the fierce resentment that burned within her soul, but she suddenly sank back, and burst into tears.

"And then, Claire," repeated Miss Digby, steadily, "what then?"

"Degradation and desolation," she faintly murmured. "I dreamed of the hour in which I should return and win back the recreant heart that has broken mine; but he will give me a rival, and unless death kindly steps in and removes the new wife he has taken to his false heart, I should even then have no chance of success."

"My dear child, you must lay aside such sinful fancies, or they will blight all that is sweet and noble in your nature. Go to France if you wish it, seek a reunion with the brother who is your natural protector; acquire accomplishments and grace, but dedicate them to a better purpose than the one you spoke of just now. Walter has proved to you that he is not worthy to be regaled; leave him out of your future plans altogether, and try to forget him. In doing so, lies your only chance of happiness."

"Perhaps so," replied Claire, listlessly. Then suddenly raising her dark eyes to the face of her companion, she imploringly asked:

"Will you tell me one thing, Miss Digby? Did

Walter leave me without seeking to see me again? Was he so hard of heart that he never once came near me while I lay so ill? If he had ever really loved me—if I had been more to him than a mere toy, to be cast aside when he ceased to care for it—he must have done so; yet I have no recollection of seeing him near me while I had the power to recognize him."

She reluctantly replied:

"When all was settled between himself and his father, Walter did come hither to bid you a last adieu. You were in that long sleep in which you passed through the crisis of your fever, and I permitted him to enter your room, and take a last look at your face."

Claire listened breathlessly, and rapidly asked:

"Was—was he much moved when he saw the condition to which his treachery had reduced me?"

Miss Digby coldly replied:

"Walter is a man who always acts from impulse, as you well know. Had you been in a condition to recognize him, I do not know what the result might have been, for he was very remorseful. But, Claire, even then, his penitence did not render him unmindful of his own interests. He had the choice open to him to surrender his birthright, and cleave to you, but he preferred obeying his father's commands, though in doing so he knew that he was setting the seal to the wretchedness of three persons. He went away to claim a new wife, whom he will never try to make happy."

Claire broke in, in an excited manner:

"If you believe that, it is your duty to warn her of what is before her. I entreat that you will tell me the name of this young lady. She should be informed of his bad faith to herself, as well as his repudiation of me. It is simple justice to her not to permit her to rush into a union with him, since you believe he will not render her happy."

Her friend shook her head, and decisively replied:

"The warning would produce no result. The young lady I refer to is so deeply infatuated with Walter Thorne, that she would turn a deaf ear to all that could be urged against him. Even if she should become aware of what has taken place here, she would listen to his explanations, and be won by his eloquent tongue to forgive his infidelity, and act as if she had forgotten it."

Claire sighed wearily, and after a pause said:

"We will not talk any more on this subject now, if you please, Miss Digby. I must not excite myself, and retard my recovery, for I must get well as soon as possible, and go back to mamma. I shall answer her letter in person, and appeal to her for the protection a letter might fail to gain for me. She is the only person in this country from whom I am willing to gain assistance, though I can never be grateful enough for the kindness you lavished on me when I so dreadfully needed it."

"Speak no more of that, Claire; I wish to claim affection from you, not gratitude alone. My life is very solitary, and if you could be contented to give up your early friends, and remain with me as the child of my adoption, I should be very glad. I would afford you the opportunity of acquiring the accomplishments you desire; nay, I could assist you myself, for my education has been very thorough, and I am a fair musician. You seem to me a waif sent expressly to my arms, to rescue from the rough paths of life, show you the safe and narrow one in which you should walk, and teach you resignation to the will of Providence."

Tears sprang into the eyes of Claire as she listened to these kind words. For one moment she was tempted to throw herself into Miss Digby's arms, and thankfully receive the home she offered her. She bowed her head and wept bitterly, but she presently faltered:

"My heart is full of love and thanks, but I cannot, I cannot accept your kindness. I must go; I could never raise my head among these people to whom my painful story is known. I must work out my own fate. I see it dimly shadowed before me, too dark and lurid to be cast with yours. I have no vocation for goodness now, and I should only weary your patience, and wear out your forbearance. If I remained here I could not even try to forget the past; but in a strange land, with so much around me that will be new and interesting, I may, in time, lift from my heart the burden that has so sorely crushed it."

"I regret that you should feel thus, my child; and above all, it pains me to hear you say that you have no vocation for goodness. My dear Claire, no happiness is to be found without it, especially by one of our sex. Men may drown their sense of guilt in dissipation, and still retain a foothold in society; but to us, that brings only unmilitated degradation. Keep your heart and life pure, and all else will be well with you. Ah! if I could only watch over you, and guard you from the evil that I see is gaining

ground within you, I should feel far happier than to see you go out into the world, taking with you the sense of wrong, that may yet bring forth such bitter fruit. You have great capacity for good or evil in your nature, Claire, and the next few years of your life will decide which shall gain the mastery. Remain with me and cultivate the better portion of your character; that is my advice, though I confess it is dictated by the selfish wish to claim you as my companion."

For a brief space the unhappy girl wavered in her decision, but the impossibility of living in the same town with Walter Thorne loomed before her, and she reluctantly replied:

"I have no words to thank you, but I must go. I will never forget what you have this day said to me, and I promise you some time or other to come back. I will try and not let the evil promptings of my nature destroy all that is good within me, but just now I am afraid they are in the ascendant. Time may blunt my resentment, but the grace of heaven can alone turn my heart from the purpose that has grown stronger day by day. I will not tell you what that is now, lest you should condemn it as wrong and impracticable. But I shall accomplish it, something assures me that I shall. I am afraid I am so wicked that I should turn away from that which is pure and good, if I thought it would unfit me for what lies before me. Your kindness is appreciated, but fate is strong, and no human being can evade that which is written on its changeless record."

"Child, this is the worst form of fatalism—it might be made a shield for any crime. If you listen to its promptings, it may lead you into an abyss of wrong and wretchedness, from which there will be no escape."

"Heaven help me then, for I have no will to resist the power that drives me on. My destiny is fixed, and I cannot escape it if I would. There! don't look so severely at me, my dear friend. If my tempestuous nature could tame itself down to the quiet life you so delight in, I would make the effort to live here; but I should only become a torment to you, and something more than that to some of your neighbours. Walter will bring his new wife hither, and I leave you to judge if I could remain where I could see and hear from them, without losing my reason. I sometimes think it is tottering even now, and a change from the monotony of my present life is all that can save me. Make me well and strong as soon as possible, and let me go back to my own valley, to find there the friend who will take me far away from this land, and all the odious memories connected with it."

"Poor child! Is it indeed thus with you? Since such are your feelings, I will no longer urge you to remain with me; but, Claire, remember that my house will always be open to you; my heart ready to welcome you whenever you wish to return. You must write to Mrs. Courtney to relieve her uneasiness, for it is a long time since that letter came, and she must think it strange that she has not before heard from you."

"What am I to write? Can I tell her that I am a rejected, heart-broken creature, indebted to an angel for shelter and care? Can I calmly sit down and write the history of what has befallen me? Oh, heavens! it would madden me at once! I, who felt myself the queen of joy and happiness, in being crowned with Walter's love, have been suddenly cast down from the height of bliss to the darkness of despair! Can you expect me to tell mamma that? No—no—I can never—never do it!"

"Then permit me to write a few lines to your friend, informing her as briefly as possible of what has happened to you, and assuring her of your well-being under my care."

"It will be useless, for I must soon set out for the valley myself. I have money enough to take me back to my old home, and for my father's sake, mamma will not refuse to do all that I shall ask of her. I will accept nothing from Colonel Thorne. He shall not buy from me the right to such retribution as I intend to compass. Tell him that I spurn his gold, as contemptuously as he spurned me, when I went to his house, believing I should be gladly welcomed as its mistress. Ah! such dreams of grandeur as I had!—such visions of love and pride! Was he ever kind to anything, Miss Digby? He looked to me like a man of iron, with no tenderness, no sweetness in his nature."

"I estimate Colonel Thorne pretty much as you do. The men of his race are all unrelenting and harsh in temper. They trample on all that impedes their progress, and feel little remorse for having done so. Walter proved his descent by his treatment of yourself, though he has in him the vacillating fickleness of his mother, which takes from him the firmness of purpose that is his father's distinguishing trait. He knew that he could not be happy in poverty, but he will find it equally impos-

sible to be contented in the luxurious lot he has chosen, in preference to an humble life with one who loved and trusted him as you did."

"I am glad you think that. I would not have him contented without me. I would have him remember me in every hour of his future life; wish him to regret the past, till all joy in the present is blotted out. I am revengeful, you will say, but I think that I am only human."

"Yes, my dear, and you prove the truth of the statement that the human heart is 'prone to evil, and desperately wicked.' For your own sake, Claire, I wish you to cast such things aside; they will only sully the purity of your own soul, and you are young enough to outlive even such a blow as you have received, and, in time, recognize the hand of heaven in its chastening."

Claire shook her head, and drearily replied:

"That is impossible. So long as a drop of blood flows through my heart, it will bear with its course an indignant protest against the fate that has been awarded me. Heaven itself has formed me thus, and I cannot be untrue to my nature."

In vain did her friend endeavour to combat such a belief. She found a strong-willed and unreasoning creature, where she had hoped to find a plastic and yielding one, and she finally thought it best for Claire to follow the bent of her own inclinations.

The result of that agitating conversation was a relapse, and Claire lingered through the long, dreary winter, too inert to make an effort to regain her spirits—too hopeless to care whether she lived or died.

Nothing was heard from Walter Thorne, and the weeks rolled by till spring began to open. With its first warm breath health began to return to the stricken Claire, for now she had an object to attain. She must regain her strength in time to reach the valley before Mrs. Courtney's departure, and with this incentive she began to rally from her deep depression and regain her wasted energies.

She steadily refused to see any of the visitors that came to the cottage, though more than one felt a warm interest in her fate. They were, however, enemies of Colonel Thorne, and would have exposed the cause of any one he had badly treated.

His political enemies did not fail to make capital out of his domestic trouble, and Claire would have been still more deeply humiliated, if she had known the use that was made of her name. But Miss Digby carefully kept the papers from her sight, and she was spared this crowning shame.

The vituperations lavished on the popular candidate had little effect, however, for Colonel Thorne was elected by an overwhelming majority, and in the elation of success he again wrote to Ada Digby, offering to share his new state with her. The answer was the same unvarying refusal, and she wondered when her persevering wooer would cease to enact this farce.

Many times did Claire speak of the necessity of setting out on her journey, but her kind friend always found some unanswerable reason for detaining her longer, until she at last grew restive and determined to go without Miss Digby's knowledge.

Claire quietly collected the few things she wished to take with her, for the trunks containing Walter Thorne's lavish presents, which had been sent to the cottage, she resolved to leave behind her.

One night in April she disappeared, leaving the following note for Miss Digby:

"DEAR AND KIND FRIEND,—You would not let me go if I warned you of my intention, but I must leave in time to see Mrs. Courtney before she goes to France. I have set my heart on going with her, and I think she will not refuse to take me."

"Do not think me ungrateful, for I am not so. I shall never forget your kindness to the forlorn stranger thrown upon your protection, and I will write constantly, and let you know what happens to me."

"I hope some day to see you again, but if I do, I shall bring with me from my foreign exile the power to right my wrongs. If that be denied me, I shall never seek my native shore after once leaving it."

"Beloved friend, adieu! think kindly of me—pray for me, for I can seldom pray for myself."

"Your affectionate protégée,

"CLAUDE LAPERRIERE, THORNE."

Miss Digby was much annoyed and distressed at this unlooked-for escapade, and she reluctantly came to the conclusion that any attempt on her part to reclaim Claire would be useless. The path she had marked out for herself she would walk in, lead her whither it might.

Her friend knew that the runaway could easily find her way back to the valley, as she had the means of defraying her expenses; and, in this country, even so young a girl could travel alone with perfect safety; so she resolved to allow Claire to pursue her journey without molestation.

CHAPTER XXXII.

WALTER THORNE decided that no resource was left him but to obey his father's commands. After the scene with Miss Digby which has been described, he returned to the spot on which he had left his horse, inwardly raging at her firmness, and cursing the fate that drove him from the girl of his choice, to ask another woman to assume the place from which she had been so ignominiously thrust.

It seemed like a dream to him that, in the space of two short months, he should have been married, parted irrevocably from his wife, and sent upon his way to assume the matrimonial yoke a second time. He had every reason to believe that the divorce which had been applied for, would be granted without delay, and he had no hope that his father would consent to defer his second nuptials.

"I was a fool," he thought, "to imagine that I could influence my father to act like other men. He cares for nothing so much as his own will, and he would crush me as soon as any other, if I set myself in opposition to it. I feel that I am a miserable scoundrel, unworthy of trust, yet I am about to consummate another deadly wrong, by claiming the girl who is the cause of all my wretchedness. But for her, I should have been permitted to choose my own wife, as other men do; but she, with her infernal sharpness, saw that to win my father over was the true road to success in securing me. I have permitted my fate to be settled for me, never dreaming that I had so inconvenient a thing as a heart about me. Oh, my poor darling, it bleeds—it bleeds, though you will never believe it, nor forgive me for giving you up, to save myself from the bitter pangs of want and wretchedness. If I could have earned even a competence, I believe—I hope I should have acted differently. But, heaven knows, I am very weak and wavering—very unwilling to give up the easy, idle life I love, even for your dear sake. You had your visions of splendour too, and perhaps you would not have been better contented in obscurity than I should. Heigho, perhaps it is better, after all, that we should part. But Agnes must not be too exacting, or I shall be no better husband than my father was before me."

Thus musing, he mounted and rode swiftly away, intending to take the stage for Brighton at the next town on the route—for it was before the day of railroads.

The keen air of the autumn night allayed the fever in his blood; the image of the pale creature he had so lately seen almost at the gates of death, faded gradually from his mind, and he occupied his thoughts with her he was on his way to seek.

Had any busybody written to Agnes of the events of the last few weeks, thus making it necessary to have a scene with her—perhaps to be refused after all? But that view of the case did not afford him much annoyance; if Miss Willard asserted the dignity of her sex, and withdrew from the engagement, who knew what the result might be? At any rate, he could remain free from any other tie, and the day might come in which he could renew the union so violently broken.

His father was mortal, and his repudiated wife did not consider herself freed from the vows she had taken, for, in her belief, death alone could sever the ties that united them. If Colonel Thorne should die, leaving him master of his fortune, the wrong he had been forced to commit might be atoned for, and Claire induced to forgive him.

Thus dreaming, Walter Thorne reached the small town in which he had hired his horse, and found that he had arrived but a few moments in advance of the stage-coach. The horn soon sounded through the silent streets, and he hurried out to secure his place, mindful of his father's last threat, most anxious to conciliate him by prompt obedience to his command to reach his destination as soon as might be.

With every mile that separated him from Claire, the memory of her pallid face—of her great wrong—grew less oppressive; and with his usual lightness of nature, he thought that all was for the best—that he had done well to grasp the brilliant realities of life sooner than cling to her, who must have proved a millstone around his neck, sinking him down to depths of poverty which he shuddered even to contemplate.

He had settled himself comfortably, and was almost in the arms of Morpheus, when there was a crash—a confused medley of utterances; and he found himself lying in the wreck of the shattered vehicle, with the horses plunging violently within a few feet of his head. Fortunately for him the driver succeeded in cutting the traces, and he was extricated from the ruin with a sprained ankle and a bruised arm.

The only other passenger besides himself escaped injury, and he assisted the driver to remove Thorne to a farmhouse, which was luckily in sight. He was

hospitably received, and everything done for him that was possible, but he was laid up there a month, before he could stand on his foot or venture to use his limb again.

Thorne wrote to his father and to Agnes, stating the accident that had befallen him; and from both of them he heard before leaving the place of his detention.

Colonel Thorne informed him that he was again a free man, and urged him to set out for Brighton as soon as possible, as Mr. Willard was sinking from day to day; and if his son wished to regain his favour, he would have the marriage between himself and Agnes celebrated before his father's death.

Thorne had gradually brought himself to believe that the late episode in his life had ended in the best manner for all concerned, and by this time he was quite ready to obey the mandate of his impious father.

With calm thought had come the conviction that Agnes Willard would hold him to his troth, in spite of all that had happened since they last parted. He had loathed the thought of meeting her with words of tenderness upon his lips; but with the inconsistency of his nature, as he drew near her, the old influence she held over him began to revive, and he looked forward to their reunion almost with pleasure.

He was eager to see Agnes and ascertain from her manner if mischief had been made between them.

He had never been in love with Miss Willard, but her stronger nature had established over him a power that had always moulded him to her will, and in spite of himself, he felt its influence, even before they again met face to face.

As he arranged his toilette for his first call on Mr. Willard and his daughter, Thorne ruefully surveyed himself in the mirror, and muttered:

"Agnes will marry me in spite of myself. Even if she have heard all about me and my doings, she'll keep quiet till after the nose is tied, and then—well—then she may look out for breakers, for my temper isn't proof against everything. If I am weak, I can be dangerous."

With such feelings in his heart, Thorne tried to put on a bright and smiling expression, and he went on his way to the quiet street in which Mr. Willard lived. He found the number, rang at the door, and sent up his card.

He was ushered into a small reception-room, comfortably furnished, with a bright fire in the grate, and he sat several moments absorbed in reverie before it. He was wondering how Agnes would look: what she would say when they met, and trying to get up some show of interest in the approaching interview; but all his thoughts were suddenly put to flight by the sound of a strange voice at his elbow.

"Mr. Thorne, I believe. I am glad that you have arrived at this crisis, sir, for Mr. Willard is almost *in articulo mortis*. I have been affording him the consolations of religion, but his anxiety for your arrival was so absorbing, that I fear he was not as much benefited by my ministrations as a man in his condition should be. But you are here now, and his mind can be set at rest on the score of his daughter's future."

Thorne started up at the commencement of this address, and saw before him a tall, pale man, of grave and stately presence, whom he should at once have identified as a clergyman, even without the clue to his profession afforded by his words.

"Is Mr. Willard so bad as that? I am grieved to hear it, for I hoped he was improving."

"There has been little hope from the first; and for the last few days he has rapidly sunk. I was sent for this morning, and when the priest is summoned to the bedside of a worldly man, you know there is not much hope of life left to him."

Thorne bowed, and briefly asked:

"Can I see him, sir?"

"It was to invite you to his room, and to prepare you to comply with his last wishes, that I came hither. I understand from Mr. Willard that you have been long betrothed to his daughter, and it is his most earnest desire to see you united to her, before he passes away from earth and all its cares. Every arrangement has been made in anticipation of your arrival, as your father wrote that you would be here to-day."

The suddenness of the request was a severe blow to him. He had unconsciously hoped that something might interpose to release him from the necessity of making Agnes Willard his wife; but in this crisis of affairs he saw no means of escape. He felt the net narrowing around him, and soon he would be bound beyond the possibility of escape. He confoundedly said:

"It is quite true that I have long been betrothed to Miss Willard, but—but she may have some objections to so precipitate a marriage. I would not for the world be the cause of making her unhappy in any way, and—and, just at this time, with her



[THE SECOND MARRIAGE.]

father so near death, she may shrink from fulfilling the compact. To tell the truth, I had rather be married myself under more cheerful circumstances."

The reverend gentleman evidently regarded him with extreme surprise. He coldly said:

"Miss Willard offered no objection to an immediate marriage. On the contrary, she has expressed her willingness to relieve her father's mind of all uneasiness on her account, by accepting you as her legal protector before his decease. I think, Mr. Thorne, that nothing remains to you but to accede to the wish of both father and daughter!"

With a sort of reckless despair, Walter replied:

"I am quite ready; let it be as they wish. But—but should there not be a licence?—or can we dispense with that formality?"

"That has already been obtained, in anticipation of your arrival. The most important thing now is, to set the mind of the dying man at rest, and that can only be done by making his daughter your wife. The expediency of your marriage will scarcely be disputed by anyone, I presume, as all parties have been long agreed concerning it."

"No—there will be no one to set aside this marriage," said Thorne, with intense bitterness; but seeing that the clergyman looked surprised at the emphasis, he hastened to add.

"I am quite ready, sir. Pray lead the way to Mr. Willard's room."

Feeling more like a criminal going to execution, than a bridegroom about to meet his betrothed, Walter Thorne ascended the flight of steps that led to the upper chambers, and drew near the apartment of the dying man. The door was softly opened, and he looked on the scene within with a stony calmness, which gave him the power to go through with what was before him, without too glaringly betraying the reluctance with which he played the part required of him.

Mr. Willard, only the ghastly spectre of his former self, was supported in a sitting position by a number of pillows; and his daughter, wrapped in a crimson shawl, knelt on a cushion beside his bed, holding in her clasp the wasted hands that were already chilling in death.

The face of Agnes was worn and pale, but her hair was carefully arranged, and her toilette showed that she had not forgotten that before the day was over, her betrothed would arrive. She raised her head as he entered the room, gave him a single glance, and his inconstant heart smote him as he saw the love-light flash into the eyes from which, an instant before, tears were raining.

"Oh, Walter, you are here at last!" she impulsively exclaimed. "I have looked and waited for your presence so long—so long!"

Thorne felt the reproach; at that moment he pitied her, and he would have spoken some words of affection, but Mr. Willard, in a voice so hollow that it sounded as if issuing from a vault, said:

"You are in time, Mr. Thorne. We have long watched and waited for your arrival; but, although you have come at the eleventh hour, you are not too late to give me, before I die, the certainty that my child will not be left alone in the world. You are ready to give your hand to Agnes, I do not doubt, and she has already assured me that she will afford me this last consolation, before I leave her for ever."

The lips of the young man refused to unclosse for a moment, but the effort he made to speak was at last successful.

"I am quite ready, Mr. Willard; though I regret that our union must take place under such afflicting circumstances. I had no idea that I should find you thus, or I would have made an effort to get here before this time."

"My last earthly journey is almost finished, my dear son, but I hope to see you and Agnes start on a long and happy one, before the curtain falls on my self. Doctor, will you ask Mrs. Ralston to step into this room a few moments? She, with yourself, will be sufficient to witness what is about to take place here."

A small man in black came from behind a window curtain which had hitherto shrouded him from observation, and crossing the floor, opened the door of an adjoining apartment.

Agnes arose from her kneeling position, looked earnestly upon the agitated face of Thorne, and extended her hand as she whispered:

"Do not be alarmed, Walter. It will soon be over, and we must think more of papa than of ourselves just now."

This brought back to the reality of the part he was required to play, Thorne took the offered hand, lightly pressed it, and replied in the same subdued tone:

"Pardon me, Agnes. I am only bewildered by the suddenness of all this, but I am sure I am not frightened at the thought of claiming you as my own."

"And I am happy to become yours, even thus," she fervently replied, a faint roseate glow coming into her pale cheek, which rendered her infinitely attractive. "You have been a laggard in love, but when I have only you to cling to, you will stone for all you have made me suffer since we met."

"I will endeavour to do so," he muttered, wondering if she really knew anything of the events of the

last two months, yet was willing to forgive, and accept him again as if nothing had happened to mar the smooth current of their wooing.

The physician came back, accompanied by a lady in mourning; the clergyman unclosed his book; Mr. Willard made a feeble motion to him to commence the ceremony, and the solemn words of the marriage service were spoken, the responses being almost mechanically made by the two thus inauspiciously joined together.

Thorne felt as if he must be dreaming; that he who had so lately plighted himself, heart and soul, to another woman, could not be holding the hand of Agnes Willard in his own, vowing to love and cherish her throughout the life they were henceforth to spend together. It must be a horrid nightmare from which he would presently awake, to find himself once more free.

He looked pale, and distraught; but the girl who stood beside him glowed with exultation that she had secured him at last; she said to herself:

"Walter does not yet love me with all his heart and soul, but he shall learn that sweet lesson before we have been married many weeks. My father is leaving me; but another, who is still dearer, is taking his place near me, and even beside his death-couch I dare to be happy."

When the benediction was pronounced, Mr. Willard sunk back with a sigh of satisfaction, and feebly said:

"Now I am ready to go. Be good to my child, Walter; she has long loved you most faithfully."

The newly-wedded pair knelt beside the bed; the clammy hand of the dying man was laid upon the two that were still clasped together, and Walter felt as if its chilling grasp was upon his very heart. He made an effort to give the assurance the earnest gaze of Mr. Willard seemed to demand, but his parched lips refused to utter the words he would have forced from them; and he could only look intently into the fading eyes that were long searching upon his.

What the father read there with the clairvoyance of a parting spirit, caused him to utter a cry of anguish, and in a stronger voice than he had yet spoken, he exclaimed:

"It is done, alas! and cannot be undone;" and he fell back as the words seemed rent from his lips, struggling as if in the agonies of death.

Agnes started up, saying:

"What do you mean, father? What would you have undone? Not my marriage with Walter, I am sure."

(To be continued.)



[THE FORETTI MYSTERY.]

COPPER AND GOLD

CHAPTER I.

In the year 1835 two Italians, calling themselves Vasco and Vellino Foretti, portrait painters, arrived in London, and rented a house at the West End.

Their extraordinary excellence as artists, despite the high prices for their work, soon made their name well known among people of wealth and taste; and it became fashionable to pay frequent visits to the Foretti saloons, not merely to engage their services in perpetuating beauty or homeliness upon canvas, or to admire the many splendid pictures upon the walls, but also to meet persons distinguished for wealth, fashion, position or taste.

In addition to these attractions of the Foretti saloons, there was another, enveloped in a certain air of mystery with which society had seen fit to invest the artists.

Report and common belief made them father and son; though, notwithstanding all that had been learned from either, their relationship might be very distant or very near.

To those whose inquisitiveness led them to meddle with what did not concern them, the Foretti had one reply. To the often asked question: "Are you not father and son?" the answer was ever the same; not merely in the same words, but in the same tone of profound sadness, thus:

"Neither of us has any relative nearer than we are to each other."

A few, less polite than the others, had ventured to press this inquiry even to impertinence, yet never more than once; for when thus annoyed, the dark and brilliant eyes of the Foretti flashed fiercely, while their features became haughty and scornful.

Vasco, the elder, apparently fifty years old, was in form, stature and feature, the exact counterpart of Vellino, the younger, except that age had more deeply furrowed the brow and marked the countenance of the former. There was more elasticity of step and quickness of action in Vellino; but besides these differences there was no remarkable dissimilarity between them not even in their voices, which were soft, low, and seldom heard above a whisper.

There was more to be seen in the Foretti saloons, apt to excite the curiosity and interest of the visitors. The attendant of the mysterious Italians was himself as great a mystery as his two masters.

This attendant, whom the Foretti called Alaric, was a tall and powerfully framed Arab, yet so lithe

of limb, noiseless and rapid in movement, that visitors compared him sometimes to a serpent, and as often to a leopard.

The Forettis were small men, and thus the contrast between them and the lofty stature of their swarthy visaged attendant was very great.

The Arab was believed to be mute, for no word ever fell from his lips, though it was well known that his sense of hearing was marvellously keen.

His costume, half Oriental, half European, admirably displayed his large yet perfectly proportioned limbs and massive chest, the whole topped by a handsome, well-shaped head, and a countenance remarkable for natural dignity and subdued fierceness.

No visitor had ever obtained a word from the haughty lips of Alaric, nor even a smile, nor a glance of recognition. To all except to the Forettis he was deaf, impassive, totally indifferent. To the latter he was unceasingly attentive; and upon each, with a restless, anxious vigilance, his black and flashing eyes were ever turned, and the slightest gesture of either was instantly understood and obeyed by him with a rapidity and silence, a suppleness and dexterity almost magical.

He never turned even his eye in response to any remark addressed to him by others, nor moved a muscle of his lordly face, though ladies of the rarest beauty and queenly grace sought to attract his attention.

Close observers had remarked, however, that Alaric's keen eye studied earnestly the face of every visitor, when that face appeared for the first time in the Foretti saloons.

This earnestness was so intense that the younger Foretti had been seen to reprove it with a steady gaze and frowning brow, while Vasco had been observed to make a quick gesture of secret reprimand.

The Foretti saloons consisted of two large apartments thrown into one, and connecting with several smaller rooms, all furnished luxuriously with carpets and couches of the richest fabric and most costly fashion, while the walls were resplendent with gorgeous mirrors, paintings and portraits of great merit.

It was plain to all that the Foretti were rich, and as fashionable society ever connects labour of every kind with want, this fact added much to that mystery with which report had draped the artists. Why should persons able to possess these costly saloons, adorned with vases, any one of which would have been prized by the most wealthy, labour with their hands, even though that labour was painting?

Surely they did not paint merely for money, for as lucrative as was their patronage it had been dis-

covered that their daily charities and gifts to the poor equalled at least, if they did not exceed, the income the Forettis derived from their art.

"Surely," said society, "they do not paint for immortality, for none of us, however generous an opinion we may have of ourselves, are so famous as to create fame for any one who may place our faces upon canvass."

"It is simply absurd," added society, "to imagine that they paint for pleasure, for one must work to paint, and to say that there is a pleasure to be found in working, is to declare ourselves mechanics, which would be disgraceful."

It was therefore universally agreed by society that the Forettis were a mystery, and worthy of its fashionable patronage; and thus the Foretti saloons were daily visited by scores who, though rich in purse, were poor in brains, simply because it was fashionable.

The Foretti had been in London several weeks, and it was at the close of a day in December, a time when deep darkness rapidly follows the setting sun, when we introduce the reader to these three personages.

The night, for though scarcely six o'clock the darkness in the streets was profound, was one of rain and wind, and the Foretti little expected visitors of either sex; not merely because the night was stormy, but because it was well known that no one ever visited the Foretti saloons after sunset.

A single lamp of gilded bronze dimly illuminated the saloons, and this only for the chance convenience of the artists, who, with Alaric, were in an apartment of the Foretti residence, jealously guarded against the intrusion of all visitors.

This apartment, small in extent, but lofty, was furnished in the same costly style so admired in the saloons, except as regards paintings upon the walls, of which there were but three, and each of these heavily draped in black velvet, so that unless the drapery was raised, the paintings were hidden.

Two of these paintings were of the same size, but the third, placed between these two, was scarcely half so large as the others.

Vasco and Vellino, still wearing the loose flowing gowns of rich crimson velvet in which they ever received their patrons, and the long visored caps which no visitor had ever seen them take off, even to the fairest or the highest, stood before these veiled portraits.

Alaric, with arms folded across his chest, and eyes fixed upon his masters, seemed to await some signal from them before performing a customary duty.

"Another day is now added to the dreary year.

that have passed in fruitless search, and we have not found her whom we love, nor him whom we hate," said Vellino, in a voice full of bitterness, and no longer using that whispering tone so well known and so much wondered at by his fashionable patrons, but speaking in clear, sharp and ringing accents.

"Another day," repeated Vasco, as bitterly and as clearly, and had anyone except Alaric heard and not seen him, that hearer would have vowed that Vellino was still speaking, so exactly alike in pitch, tone, and accent were the voices of these two men, whether they whispered or spoke aloud.

"Another day," repeated Vasco, "and so, my child, more days, swelling into weary years of disappointment, will continue to pass, and we will never find him whom we hate. As for her whom we love—ah, we need not hope to find her upon earth. She is dead."

"No, no!" exclaimed Vellino, eagerly, falling upon his knees while he raised his hands and eyes to the middle picture. "Unveil it, Alaric, unveil the features of my child. If heaven have denied me the happiness of seeing her growth in strength and beauty, at least it gave me the power to portray her charming face as it presses upon my heart."

Alaric stepped forward with his long and noiseless tread, and with a single sweep of his arm unveiled the middle painting.

Thus was revealed an exquisitely-painted portrait of an infant girl, the features angelic in their beauty and innocence, though the expression of the eyes was as defiant and resolute as one might expect to see in the eyes of a man, but never in those of a child.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Vellino, pressing his hands upon his bosom, and gazing upon this picture with an eagerness almost amounting to wildness, so intense was its expression of love. "Good heavens! thou didst inspire me and give my hand skill when I painted that semblance of my lost Antonia! How like, oh my heart, how like!"

"My child," said Vasco Foretti, in a reproachful tone, "remember your promise not to yield to grief or love, before the semblance of the dead!"

"She is not dead," exclaimed Vellino. "My soul will not receive that belief. She lives, and some day I shall press her to my bosom. Oh, my father, do not seek to deprive me of this hope, for if I lose it my heart will then cease to beat."

The features of the Arab, until now impassive, became animated with an expression which might readily be interpreted into these words:

"I have devoted my life and soul to the service of these two men, but it is Signor Vellino whom I love, and if he die I have nothing worth living for."

The features of Vasco and Vellino, at this moment, wore far different expressions. Those of Vasco declared his anxiety for his son. Those of Vellino wore expressive of grief and love for the infant whose portrait had so remarkable an effect upon him.

"I do not wish, Vellino," said the father, kindly, as he assisted his son to his feet, "to deprive you of that hope, and I was wrong to say that Antonia was dead. Let us continue to hope that she lives, and that some day, when we least expect it, she will be restored to our arms, or rather to yours, for I have never seen her."

"Yes, my father, you have never seen her, and therefore cannot imagine how I love her," replied Vellino.

"You love her even as I love you, my child," said Vasco, drawing Vellino's head to his bosom with a fond gesture. "Think, my child, would it not be better that this infant, though dead, were an infant in heaven, than that she should have lived to suffer, as you have suffered and are now suffering? Far better had it been for you, Vellino, had you died, as young as Antonia was, when you lost her, than as it is now. Yet I should have grieved as deeply for you, my child, as you do for Antonia."

"No, my father, not so bitterly, oh, not so bitterly, for you would have known me to be dead, at rest, in heaven; but there is at my heart, connected with this powerful belief that Antonia lives, a gnawing, horrible fear that she has been reared by—"

Here Vellino paused, as if he had not power to utter the name which trembled upon his lips. His face became livid with passion, with the deadly feeling of hate, his eyes flashed, and his frame quivered as if suddenly smitten with palsy.

"Do not speak his name," said Signor Vasco. "Call him, as we have ever called him, our enemy. But we have no cause to believe that Antonia fell into his power."

"The fear is here, cause or no cause, my father," replied Vellino, again pressing his hands upon his bosom. "Ay, and here, too," he added, tossing his cap aside and placing his palms upon his brow.

This act revealed a broad and lofty forehead, and an elegantly-shaped, though small head, upon which grew short and jet black hair, as glossy as the raven's wing.

Yet, this brow, so broad and intellectual, bore the deep impress of heartrending grief. It spoke of genius, thought, goodness, and all noble qualities, darkly tinged by the hand of misfortune.

Every feature of Vellino's face was exquisitely moulded. Had his countenance not lost the freshness of youth, it would have served even his own critical and fastidious taste as a model, for one of those gems with which his taste and talent had adorned his saloons.

An indefinable air of resolution, and the manly firmness of his gaze and glance redeemed this countenance from the charge of effeminacy.

When Vellino threw aside his cap the eyes of the Arab sparkled with pleasure, or rather with delight, but his eyes alone declared his emotion.

"You seek your daughter," said Vasco, wishing to arrest the tide of bitter thoughts coursing through the brain of his son. "Would to heaven I could have mine restored to me as she appears there!"

As Signor Vasco spoke he extended his arm towards one of the veiled paintings.

Alaric eagerly construed this gesture as a command, and moving aside the heavy velvet curtain which hung over the painting, revealed the portrait of a maiden clad in rich Florentine costume.

"See," continued the elder Foretti, as he pointed to this superb work of art; "as you believe that heaven inspired you faithfully to portray the features of your child, so do I believe that heaven inspired me, as I thus depicted the angelic loveliness of mine. Ah, Milania," he added, as he gazed upon the portrait, "it was then you looked when last these eyes beheld you."

This second portrait was no less admirable for the perfection of its execution than for the faultless beauty of the face it represented.

Alaric, retiring apart, that his features should not be seen by his masters, gazed upon it with eyes radiant with love beyond expression.

Signor Vellino abruptly turned his eyes to the floor, saying:

"My father, your wish is vain, for the original of that picture is no longer as she was then."

With these words a dark and bitter look flashed over his face, and folding his arms he still gazed moodily upon the floor.

"I loved thee, Milania," cried Signor Vasco, addressing the portrait as if he imagined it to be a living being. "I loved thee, my daughter, ay, even more than I did thy mother—ay, far more than I ever loved any one on earth."

"She was unworthy of your love, my father," said Vellino, in a harsh yet smothered tone. "She forsook your love for that of—"

Again Vellino's trembling lips refused to utter the name which had now twice risen to them, and again Vasco exclaimed:

"Our enemy! Yes, she deemed my love as drops compared to that of our enemy. Yet I have forgiven her for that."

"I have not, nor can I ever forgive her," said Vellino, sadly. "But now that we have each gazed upon the semblance of her whom we love, let us behold the face of him whom we hate!"

"Yes, the face of him who filled our hearts with gall and ashes," replied Signor Vasco, as his eyes blazed with sudden rage. "Unveil the portrait, Alaric, for you, unhappy man, have no little cause to hate him, whose name we do not speak—our enemy!"

The Arab's swarthy face grew almost black as he stepped forward and slowly revealed the third painting.

It was the portrait of a young man some twenty-five or six years of age, a manly, noble, handsome and haughty face, in which there did not appear a single feature expressive of an evil trait; the face of a French officer, as could be seen by the uniform of scarlet and gold painted upon the bust, and by the general French characteristics of the countenance.

"He was godlike in his beauty," whispered Vellino, as his eyes became fixed upon this splendid face.

His heart was the heart of a devil!" exclaimed Vasco, as his slight frame quivered with rage, and as he tossed aside his cap.

This action revealed his forehead, the same broad and noble brow that rose so grandly above the dark eyes of his son, yet infinitely more wrinkled and furrowed than that of Vellino.

"If it be possible," said Signor Vasco, fiercely, as he shook his clenched hand at the portrait, "if it be possible that you, Vellino, love your child more than I loved mine, at least I hate this man more than you do."

"I hate him, my father," replied Vellino, sharply. "I hate him as intensely as she once deeply, madly loved him."

In uttering these words Signor Vellino extended his hand towards the portrait of the maiden.

It was then that Alaric uttered a strange cry,

speaking no word, yet expressing the fierce, strange and undying hate, and snatching a pencil of coloured chalk from a table near, he wrote in large, distinct letters beneath the portrait of the Frenchman these words:

*"Our Enemy!
MARANATHA!"*

"Maranatha," said Signor Vasco, as he read aloud this Syriac word. "It means, 'May the Lord come quickly to take vengeance on thee for thy crime.' It is well, Henceforth we will call our enemy 'Maranatha.'"

"Maranatha!" repeated Signor Vellino, raising both hands towards heaven, while his eyes flashed hatred at the portrait.

Alaric did not utter this word. He could not. But opening his mouth to its widest extent he pointed to the place where a tongue had once been, but was no more, and then kneeling towards the east raised his hands towards heaven, while a great gasping sob of agony burst from his speechless lips.

It was plain that the Arab was praying to Allah and his Prophet, for vengeance upon him who had robbed him of man's greatest blessing—the power of speech.

His lips could not speak the curse, yet the Foretti knew that the soul and brain of this unfortunate man were echoing with its meaning:

"May the Lord come quickly to take vengeance on thee for thy crime!"

"Maranatha!" The dread word in which was couched the bitter hate of the three, was thus inscribed in letters blood-red, upon the white wall beneath the haughty and handsome face, which looked down upon those who hated him with firm and resolute eyes of blue, while a faint smile of illimitable dawning and fathomless cunning seemed to rest upon the faultless lips.

CHAPTER II.

SOCIETY was right. There was a mystery connected with, or rather belonging to, the Foretti.

There was more. There were mysteries, dark, sombre and intricate in plot and counterplot, which enshrouded Vasco and Vellino as a garment, encompassed them as an atmosphere, filled the very air they inhaled.

The proud visitors of the elegant saloons, who regarded the speechless Arab as a mere attendant, selected, perhaps, by these patrician Italians, whose every gesture spoke of gentle birth and aristocratic bearing, as a contrast to their rapid gesticulation, quick utterance, and small stature, little suspected that his fate and life were interwoven with those of these gifted artists, whose skill and genius made the inanimate canvas breathe with faultless representation of the living.

Regarding Alaric as a servant, a mute, mute in fact, or feigning to be for the service of his master, society endured him as a necessary appendage to that pleasure which it derived in whiling away tedious time in the Foretti saloons.

If right to aristocracy be founded upon ancient and perfectly proved ancestry, the Arab was an aristocrat; for he could trace his line of descent unbroken back to the Hegira of his Prophet. Nor need he have paused at the rise of the camel-driver, since the traditional archives of his princely house ran far back into dusty eras of the Arabian deserts, centuries before Mohammed was born.

If right to aristocracy be based upon intellect, the Arab was an aristocrat; for his mind was as far superior to those of common society as diamond is to paste.

If right to aristocracy be founded upon knowledge, the Arab was an aristocrat; for his hand could do that which his tongue once had delighted to do—be eloquent in every modern as well as in every ancient language.

He was skilled in every art and science.

Often had the Foretti, masters as they were of their art, wondered as Alaric's hand caught up a pencil and added new beauty, hand-drawn and perfect to pictures they thought finished.

And this he would do with a modest though careless grace, seeming to ask pardon for the liberty he took, in presuming to add to what his masters called complete.

If aristocracy be founded upon wealth, the Arab was an aristocrat. The single jewel he wore in the golden buckle of his zone would have made many a thriving merchant rich. The diamonds which flashed in his turban were worth the united fortunes of half of those who looked disdainfully upon him because they thought him a maniac.

The Foretti were rich, yet society, which sees but the surface, would have worshipped the Arab whose curious garb it supposed to be a livery, had it dreamed the truth—that Alaric's wealth of gold could have swallowed that of the Foretti thrice told.

Could this man have spoken his thoughts, as he rose from his knees and fixed his eyes upon the portrait of the handsome Frenchman, he would have said :

" As you, Signor Vellino, believe that heaven inspired you when you so faithfully painted the features of your Antonia; and as you, Signor Vasco, believe that heaven inspired you when you depicted the countenance of your Milania, so do I believe that mine was an inspiration, when I painted that perfect likeness of our enemy, of Maranatha ! "

Thus it was. The Foretti had exhausted love and skill, memory and genius, in pourtraying the features of their beloved.

The Arab had exhausted neither skill nor memory in creating the semblance of his enemy. Hate, inexhaustible, eternal, unsatiated, insatiable, had aided genius, had prompted memory—was craving to meet in the flesh that which it had repeated upon canvas.

Love, pure, innocent, virtuous, parental, had inspired the work of the Arab.

So love and hate swept on, hand in hand, to accomplish the decrees of fate, to compass the slow but sure and terrible vengeance of heaven upon lust, cruelty and avarice.

Though the lips of the Arab could not speak his thoughts, they flashed from his eyes and were eloquent upon his features.

" Yes," said Signor Vasco to Alaric, in a tone of pity, " we know what you would say, prince. As we painted the semblance of our beloved, you pourtrayed that of their destroyer."

Alaric's eyes seemed to leap with living fire, and again he pointed into his tongueless mouth. Then a sudden convulsion of feeling came over him, and bowing his stately head upon his bosom, he turned his face to the wall, weeping bitterly, though he made no sound.

The Forettis drew near together, while their faces expressed the most profound compassion and respect for their attendant.

" We deem our misfortunes terrible," whispered Vasco to his son, " yet I often think that he is more to be pitied than we are. It is true that our hearts have been wrung, our soul's brightest hopes blighted—let him give free vent to his grief, Vellino," he added, quickly, as the latter was about to advance towards the Arab. " It is not often that the haughty heart of this Arabian prince yields a tribute of tears to his agony of mind. Let us turn our eyes aside, for he will not be pleased if we take notice of his emotion."

It was hard for the younger Foretti to restrain his desire to at least attempt to soothe the anguish of his faithful attendant; but observing a grave and rebuking expression in the features of his father, he obeyed, though tears welled from his eyes, and a tremour of emotion shook his frame.

" So," continued Vasco, placing himself between Vellino and Alaric, " let him weep, for sometimes I think that were I my heart would burst did I not weep. It is left to us to speak of our misfortunes. He cannot utter a word to call for sympathy—"

" Nor need he, my father, with eyes like his," interrupted Vellino.

" His grief, or rather his agony, for it is more than grief," continued Vasco, " is speechless, and gnaws at his proud heart increasingly. Think to what a condition the inhumanity and fiendish ingratitude of the Frenchman has reduced this man, once an Emir of the Desert, a noble and generous prince, at the uplifting of whose hand ten thousand turbanned warriors sprang into their saddles to obey him."

" Yet he still is a prince, and were he to return to Arabia, his warriors and chiefs would gladly accept him as their head," said Vellino.

" He well knows that, my son, but when he, whom we call Maranatha, tore out the tongue of Alaric, he tore from his noble heart every passion except two, love and revenge. Alaric loves and Alaric hates. The hope that both may yet be gratified, makes him what he is, our friend and seeming attendant."

" It is hard that hate must be gratified ere love may be asked," said Vellino, with a bitter sigh.

" We give the desire for righteous vengeance too dark a name," replied Vasco. " Rather say justice must be done to the destroyer ere love can be honourable, for so long as Maranatha lives, Alaric, and she whom he loves, can not, should not, must not, speak, though they dream of love."

" Perhaps this Maranatha is dead," said Vellino.

" No," exclaimed his father, fiercely. " If he may have died upon a bed of disease, though of the most horrid kind, or by the hand of some deadly foe, no matter how, when, or where he may have died, he should have met you, or me, or that mutilated prince face to face, and perished, not before the eyes of only one of us, nor by the hand of only one of us, but in the presence of all three, by the combined act of all, with the eyes of all glaring hate and triumph into his dying face. So I have prayed it might be, and so I pray now."

The elder Foretti uttered these impassioned words in sharp and thrilling accents, while his countenance, usually so intellectually beautiful, became distorted by passion, and as he concluded, he sank upon his knees, and raised his quivering hands towards heaven, which he feared might have already snatched his enemy from his vengeance.

" It is time," murmured Vellino, shuddering and turning pale, " I do not hate Maranatha as he does. Can it be possible that I could pity that man who is in our power?"

" Here!" exclaimed Vasco, springing to his feet and addressing both Vellino and Alaric. " Let us renew our oath—we three—we, the victims of that incarnate fiend, that Maranatha, let us again swear never to relinquish our search for our enemy, so long as one of us shall live, never to ask the love of man or woman until we shall have trampled upon the body of that man, or if he be dead, upon his grave. Swear, my children, swear!"

Signor Vasco extended a hand to each of his hearers, but they did not place their palms in his.

Vellino cast a quick glance towards Alaric, avoiding the fiery eyes of his father, and then said, mildly:

" My father, it is an insult to the prince to desire him to repeat an oath he has already taken in your presence. It is not just to me."

A dark and sarcastic smile played around the lips of the elder Foretti as he listened to these words. His bright and piercing glance leaped from face to face, and the smile vanished as a frown gathered heavily upon his brow.

The Arab prince, for such he was, showed no emotion upon a countenance still moist with tears, though his splendid eyes seemed to thank Vellino for his words.

" So," cried Signor Vasco, sharply, after a pause, " after all it seems that a desire to love is stronger than a desire to avenge. You each have some one enshrined in your hearts whom you love, and your love for that one is stronger than your hate for Maranatha."

Vellino kept his eyes fixed upon the portrait of the infant girl, but those of the Arabian flashed proudly as they met the angry glance of the elder Foretti with unmoving steadiness.

" Ah, Vellino," said Foretti, " you fix your gaze upon the portrait of your lost Antonia, your missing child, yet is there not one whose love might come between you and your love for a child which may be an angel in heaven?"

" None, if she lives," replied Vellino, firmly.

" And you, prince, would you not gladly relinquish this vexing, wearying pursuit for vengeance on a wretch whose crimes may already have been punished by heaven, if she whom you love would but say, ' hate no one, but let us yield all to love? '

The Arabian was about to raise his hand to his tongueless lips, and his swarthy face was blazing with rage, when his eyes met those which seemed to smile upon him from the portrait of the beautiful Florentine maiden.

His hand fell to his side instantly, his countenance softened into an expression of unbounded devotion of love, and looking steadily at the elder Foretti, he shook his head.

" Oh, if you have any doubt in the matter, my dear prince," said Foretti, sternly, and pointing to the portrait of the Frenchman, " look upon the destroyer as well as upon the victim. If the semblance of Milania can move you to unmanly mercy, perhaps that of Maranatha may arouse a manly desire for justice. It is not the first part of that oath—the oath we swore years ago, and which we have sacredly kept so long—it is not the first part of that oath which you dislike to repeat, is it? Let us see. Come, we three do swear again as we swore before, never to relinquish our search for Maranatha so long as one of us shall live. Swear!"

Both Vellino and the prince grasped the extended hands of Foretti, and smiling darkly, he continued:

" It is well, my children. There is a feeling of hate in the firmness of your grasps which warms my heart. Let us repeat the second part of that oath. We swear never to ask the love of man or woman—ab, you both withdraw your hands from mine! You will not again swear never to ask the love of man or woman, until we shall have trampled upon the body or the grave of Maranatha!"

As Signor Foretti began to repeat the latter part of the oath, both Vellino and Alaric withdrew their hands from his, as if moved by one impulse.

They did more. Each retreated a step from Foretti, and regarded him with eyes full of prayerful reproach.

He returned these looks with a sternness rarely seen upon his noble face, saying solemnly :

" Prince, you need not repeat the words. They have never passed your lips, for he whose cruelty

you might forget in your love for another, deprived you of the power to speak them—"

" Father," exclaimed Vellino, rebukingly, while his face flushed with respectful indignation, " it is ungenerous in you to remind the prince of his misfortune."

" Does he need it?" demanded Foretti, quickly. " Would he, could he, forget it were it never mentioned? Perhaps he might, since it seems that he may be tempted to forget that which should be more precious to a man of honour than his tongue—his oath."

The prince was stung by the keen reproach couched in these words, and kneeling, placed one hand on his bosom and the other in the grasp of the elder Foretti.

" Ah! you see," cried the latter, triumphantly, " the prince no longer refuses to repeat the whole of our oath. Do you, my child, still refuse?"

" You ask too much, my father," replied Vellino, in a tone of sadness. " Has not my life already been one of flight? Must it be so until I die? Perhaps, and I begin to believe it, Maranatha is dead."

" Then our oath binds us all to find and trample upon his grave," cried Foretti, harshly.

But at this moment the door of the apartment was thrown open and a stranger entered.

The stranger came in unannounced. He had not even rapped at the door to give warning of his approach.

He was a tall, bold and bluff-looking man, some fifty years of age, whose air and style of dress were by no means such as were cultivated by the fashionable visitors of the Foretti saloons.

Yet he was well clad, and there was a manly though rude politeness in his bow, as he paused at the open door and gazed at the party within the room. His features were rugged and even harsh, yet there was a frank and honest daring look in his dark and sparkling eyes, which made those who met it believe him not likely to do any one wrong, nor likely to be a man of evil thoughts.

His hat was in his hand, and thus revealed a large closely-cropped head of gray curly hair, which added greatly to the air of rugged, physical and mental power which pervaded his appearance.

The Forettis were much startled by the sudden presence of this stranger, of whose approach they had not received the slightest warning.

They had been conversing in Italian, yet in unguarded tones, and this stranger might have heard and understood far more than they would have desired to be made public.

Signor Vasco spoke first, in that calm tone of superiority too often used by the rich and fashionable in speaking to those whom they fancy to be their inferiors.

" Well, sir, your business, since it seems that we are to ask it, whether of interest to us or not."

The words were in Italian, purposefully so, for if understood by the stranger, it was plain that he had heard and comprehended something of the excited conversation which had passed.

He might have been listening at the door for a minute or ten minutes, and if he understood Italian he had heard too much.

But the stranger shook his head, saying in excellent plain English:

" Gentlemen, I speak three very good languages, English, French and German, but nothing do I know of that which you use."

" You are lying," thought all three of his listeners, whose perfect acquaintance with every language and dialect of Europe readily detected the soft Tuscan accent which smothered the harsher English. " You not only understand Italian—you are yourself an Italian—not simply an Italian, but a native of Rome."

Thus thought the Forettis and the prince, yet neither permitted the stranger to suspect that his falsehood was detected.

" Why are you here, and how comes it that you are here unannounced?" demanded Vasco, sternly, wishing to be rid of the intruder. " I will see that our street doors are more securely guarded hereafter—"

" No need of that—no need of that!" interrupted the stranger, not at all abashed. " No doubt the doors are well fastened. I know nothing of that."

" Then how came you here?"

" That is easily explained, gentlemen," replied the stranger, with a loud, frank laugh. " I came to see you this morning."

" I have no recollection of that," said Signor Vasco, quickly, and somewhat tartly, for the presence of the man vexed him, he knew not why.

" Oh, you did not see me, sir. Nor did your son—for such I suppose this gentleman to be. Yet I think your attendant there saw me, for he stared at me when I entered the saloon, as if he imagined I had come to have my very handsome countenance preserved in

oil colours for the admiration of posterity, and that he was to be the painter."

The Foretti looked at the Arabian, who smiled slightly and bowed.

"I speak the truth," continued the stranger, closing the door gently, as if he thus asked permission to form one of the party. "I came to have a portrait painted."

"Your own?" asked Vasco.

"Mine! That were indeed a rich joke to be told of old Harry Freeland!" exclaimed the stranger, with a laugh which displayed great good-humour, and a splendid set of glistening white teeth. "Thank heaven, I am not so vain as to desire that my portrait should be hung up. I came to engage your services for a picture of my daughter, but I saw so many people in the saloons that I judged it best to wait until I could speak with you alone. So finding a quiet little sofa behind a curtain, I hid myself there and fell asleep."

"Ah, then you have had a long nap, my friend, for the saloons have been vacant for several hours," said Vasco.

"No doubt. Your clock tells me that," replied the stranger, who seemed to consider the affair a good joke. "When I awoke, which was but a moment ago, two thoughts disturbed me. One was, what will my daughter say to me for this freak, and the other was, what shall I say to my daughter? How I came to ask for a portrait of her—and indeed she is as handsome as an angel, but headstrong, as handsome women always are. I have had a wife, gentlemen, and can therefore speak. But I was saying, I came here to speak for a portrait—"

Here the stranger's eyes, in roving about the apartment, fell upon the portrait of the beautiful Florentine maiden, and his tongue ceased its motion as if suddenly petrified, while his face grew deadly pale, either with passion or terror.

"The hypocrite!" he muttered. "So she has been here already. Come, I hardly thought so badly of Roulette, as this. I have slept to some purpose, it seems."

"Why do you remain silent, my friend, and why do you stare so strangely at that portrait?" asked Foretti.

"Why? Oh, for nothing," replied Freeland, for so the stranger called himself. "I am subject to sudden pangs at my heart. One of them seized me just as my eyes fell upon that portrait—oh!"

Here his eyes became fixed upon the portrait of the infant girl, and he became as suddenly pale as before, while he staggered and sank into a seat, still keeping his gaze upon the picture.

It was strange that a man of so powerful a frame as the stranger—a man whose bronzed and rugged visage seemed to declare perpetual defiance of any enemy—should be thus prostrated by the sight of the portrait of an infant.

And so thought the Foretti and the prince, though they said nothing, so overwhelmed were they with amazement.

(To be continued.)

THE young Princess of Sweden, who is engaged to be married to the Crown Prince of Denmark, has a fortune of 25,000,000 rix-dollars—that is, 1,400,000£. The sum seems an enormous one for a poor country like Sweden.

WOMEN'S VOTES.—The Home Secretary has been written to on this subject by overseers. The reply says:—"I am to inform you that it is not the duty of the Secretary of State to give legal opinions as to the construction of Acts of Parliament. I may, however, observe that it is clear that Parliament did not intend to give votes to women."

THE youthful Queen Olga of Greece, as is known, is in an interesting situation, and the Athens journals state that the Hellenic government is about to send a superior officer to Western Europe to order for the christening of the expected heir a baptismal font of massive silver, at a cost of 300,000 francs, to be defrayed by subscriptions entered into by the various communes of the kingdom. The Mayor of Athens has already set the example by inscribing the council of that capital for 20,000 francs.

SIR RICHARD MAYNE AND THE DOG DAYS.—Sir Richard Mayne appears to be under that very dismal illusion that "the dog days" are days when dogs are likely to go mad. As a matter of fact, heat has nothing on earth to do with hydrophobia, as many dogs going mad in winter as summer; but Sir Richard Mayne's views on the subject are not scientific, but popular. All dogs, consequently, found unmuzzled, or not in a chain, in London, during July and August, will be seized by the police, and if not redeemed by their owners, shot. It is a cruel delusion, which tends to produce, if not madness, the nervous irritation which makes dogs dangerous.

But as Sir Richard Mayne will have it so, let us recommend dog-owners to buy the wire-net muzzles (like coarse respirators), instead of the cruel straps which keep dogs' mouths firmly shut. They are just as cheap, much more efficient, and a hundred times more humane. The dogs can both breathe and drink freely through them.

NEW REFORM ACT.

THE following instructions for claimants under the Lodger Franchise have been prepared by Mr. Torrens, with the assistance of several of the most experienced revising barristers, and adopted by the Registration Committee of Finsbury:

"By the new Reform Act every man who for 12 months previous to the 31st of July has occupied as sole tenant the same lodgings which, if unfurnished, would let at the rate of 10/- a-year, is entitled to claim to be placed on the list of voters. Joint occupiers are disqualified by the Act, which recognizes only a claimant who by himself or his family separately occupies the lodgings. The value is a question of fact to be decided by the revising barrister on the evidence brought before him.

"If taken unfurnished the rent paid will be accepted *prima facie* as the proof of value. Every person paying 4/- a week rent for unfurnished lodgings will be entitled to claim. If the lodgings are taken furnished the claimant must show that, exclusive of a reasonable charge for the use of the furniture, the lodgings occupied by him are worth 4/- a week, or 10/- a-year. Occasional absence during the 12 months will not disqualify, provided no other person occupies in the interval, and provided the rent continues to be paid by the claimant.

"The claim must be delivered to the overseers of the parish in which the lodgings are situate not earlier than the 1st, nor later than the 25th of August.

"The lodger claim will be published by the overseers in a separate list not later than the 1st of September.

"Should the claims not appear on the published list of lodgers, then its delivery must be proved before the revising barrister. It is therefore desirable to retain a copy of the claim, and to have the means of proving its delivery to the overseers.

"The claims having been published after the 25th of August may be objected to at the Revision Court, though no notice of objection has been given either to claimants or overseers. Proof must, therefore, be made before the revising barrister by the claimant, or by some person authorized on his behalf, of due notice of the claim having been delivered and of the facts regarding his qualification.

"CLAIM OF LODGER.

"The form of claim given in the schedule of the Reform Act is as follows:—

"BOROUGH OF FINSBURY.

"To the Overseers of the parish of
"I hereby claim to be inserted in the list of voters in respect of the occupation of the undermentioned lodgings, and the particulars of my qualification are stated in the columns below:—

| Christian name and surname at full length. | Profession, trade or calling. | Description of lodgings situated, with number, and name of street. | Name, description, of landlord or other person to whom rent paid. |
|--|-------------------------------|--|---|
| | | | |

"I, the above-named hereby declare that I have been during the 12 months immediately preceding the last day of July in this year the occupier as sole tenant of the above-mentioned lodgings, and that I have resided therein during the 12 months immediately preceding the said last day of July, and that such lodgings are of a clear yearly value, if let unfurnished, of 10/- or upwards.

"Dated the day of August, 1868.

"Signature of claimant,

"Witness to the signature of the said

"And I certify my belief in the accuracy

of the above claim,

"Name of witness,

"Residence and calling,

"This claim must bear date the 1st day of August, or some day subsequent thereto, and must be delivered to the overseers after the last day of July, on or before the 23rd day of August."

A CURIOUS OLD COIN.—Mrs. Mary H. Kennedy, who resides in Dayton, Kentucky, opposite Fulton, has had her attention called to a paragraph, in which it is related that Professor Thomas A. Wise, of Dayton, has just discovered, by accident, one of the three shillings issued by order of Queen Anne in the year

1711. It is stated that two of these coins have been for a long time in possession of the British Antiquarian Society, and that the third has been advertised for a great number of times, and large premiums offered for it. The coin discovered by Professor Wise is very much worn, and on the face is a medallion of Queen Anne, with the inscription, "Anna Dei Gratia." On the reverse, "Brit. Et. Hib. Reg. 1711." Now, Mrs. Kennedy had a "pocket-piece" given her when a child in England—now more than fifty years ago—which she still has in her possession. It bears every appearance of being a genuine old coin, in excellent preservation. It is not much worn, but every letter and figure is as distinct as if struck yesterday. It has the medallion of Queen Anne quite prominent and clear, though somewhat worn, and about it the words "Anna Dei Gratia." The reverse is as Professor Wise's coin, with the exception that it contains the letters "Mag." The whole inscription—extending around a cross, decorated with crowns and a harp, with the sun in the centre—is "Mag. Bri. Fret. Hib. Reg. 1711." There seems to be but little doubt that Mrs. Kennedy has the genuine old relic so often advertised for.

STATISTICS.

IMPORTS IN 1867.—Among the imports of the past year were 10,893,780 pairs of leather gloves; 10,364,147 skins; 975,168 cwt. of hides; 79,756 cwt. of caoutchouc; 15,289 cwt. of gutta percha; 2,378,526 lbs. of bristles; 18,348 cwt. of teeth (elephant, sea cow, sea horse, or sea moose); 83,814 tons of bones (except whale fins); 2,648,360 lbs. of goats' hair or wool; manufactures of hair and of goats' wool to the value of 127,093; and clocks and watches amounting to 452,474.

More than half of the whole carrying power of the railways of the United Kingdom, devoted to goods traffic, is occupied in the conveyance of coal. So far as we can judge from returns, which do not always distinguish the kind of goods carried, the goods traffic of the railways of the United Kingdom in 1865 was as follows:—General merchandise (not including live stock), 36,800,000 tons; minerals, 18,300,000 tons; total, 55,100,000; coal and coke, 59,500,000 tons; total, 114,600,000 tons.

THE DIRECT COST OF PAUPERISM.—The sum expended in the actual relief of the poor in England and Wales during the year 1867 was 6,959,840, being at the rate of 6s. 6d. per head on the estimated population. The sum raised from poor-rates levied was 10,303,665; and there were "receipts in aid," amounting to 388,520, making a total of 10,692,188; but of this sum 3,945,833, was expended for other purposes than the actual relief of the poor—purposes which, in fact, have no connection whatever with the relief of the poor.

THE Quakers, we see from their annual return, now number only 13,185 in Great Britain, and 2,988 in Ireland, or little more than 5,000 families in all.

MOURNING FOR THE DEAD.—I saw a pale mourner stand bending over a tomb, and his tears fell fast and often. As he raised his humid eyes to heaven, he cried, "My brother!—oh! my brother!" A sage passed that way, and said—"For whom dost thou mourn?" "One," replied he, "whom I did not sufficiently love while living; but whose inestimable worth I now feel." "What wouldst thou do if he were restored to thee?" The mourner replied, that he would never offend him by an unkind word, but would take every occasion to show his friendship, if he could but come back to his fond embrace. "Then waste not thy time in useless grief," said the sage, "but if thou hast friends, go and cherish the living, remembering that they will, one day, be dead also."

COLLAR DAYS.—Easter Sunday, Easter Monday, Easter Tuesday, Ascension Day, Whit Sunday, Whit Monday, Whit Tuesday, Trinity Sunday; January 1st, New Year's Day; January 6th, Twelfth Day; February 2nd, Candlemas Day; February 24th, St. Matthias; March 1st, St. David; March 17th, St. Patrick; March 25th, Lady Day; April 23rd, St. George; April 25th, St. Mark; May 1st, St. Philip and St. James; May 24th, the Queen's Birthday; May 29th, Restoration of the Royal Family; June 20th, her Majesty's Accession; June 24th, St. John the Baptist; 28th, her Majesty's Coronation; June 29th, St. Peter; July 25th, St. James; August 24th, St. Bartholomew; September 21st, St. Matthew; October 29th, St. Michael the Archangel; October 18th, St. Luke; October 28th, St. Simon and St. Jude; November 1st, All Saints; November 5th, Gunpowder Plot; November 30th, St. Andrew; December 21st, St. Thomas; December 25th, Christmas Day.



[BESSIE'S DOUBTS.]

SILVERDELL.

" You are right, Aunt Margaret, I am not satisfied that Harry loves me, and this fearful doubt of his affection that so constantly shadows my heart, renders me sad and desponding."

" Why, darling, is he not attentive, affectionate, and kind? Surely he is devoted in his attendance upon my particular little niece; why then allow these unwise forebodings to destroy her peace of mind?" replied Mrs. Singleton.

" I acknowledge, dear aunt, that he seems all that is right in that respect; but his heart, I fear, is cold and calculating. Never for the last three months have I deserted myself of the haunting thought that Harry Wetmore is seeking me for my wealth alone, and not for the deep affection my loving disposition craves. Would that I could satisfy myself that gold is not the attraction. I would gladly give all my wealth in exchange for the honest and devoted love of some manly and noble heart, for without this, marriage, I am convinced, will be a dreary blank."

" You are right, Bessie; love is more to be desired in married life than golden treasures. I hope in your case, however, both wealth and affection will not be wanting."

A long silence ensued after the last remark, during which the soft hazel eyes of Bessie Sherwood remained fixed upon the dancing jets of flame that leaped from the cannel coal reposing within the well-filled grate, casting every now and then its bright, glowing light upon the objects around, then dying down for an instant, only to leap back into notice with greater brilliancy and force. It was a beautiful young face that now drooped before that firelight, as its owner passed her diamond-girdled fingers through the auburn hair she was unbraiding for the night, while the crimson wrapper she had thrown around her graceful form did not diminish, even by

its negligence, the queenly beauty of its wearer. Her rich evening dress, with the jewels and flowers she had worn to Miriam Howell's party, where her affianced husband had accompanied her, now lay carelessly upon the bed, while the question of her fond aunt—"Why she had returned so low-spirited from a scene of gaiety?" had caused the sudden moan of an aching, anxious heart to find vent in the words recorded above.

What there was lacking in Harry's manner to herself, she could not have described; but she knew full well she had felt a difference when Reginald Murray caught her, as her foot slipped while descending the stairs to enter the parlour, that evening, and she saw his handsome blue eyes fixed anxiously upon her, as he asked so tenderly if she were hurt, while Harry only laughed and joked at the affair as heartily as possible. She had injured herself considerably, her ankle being so twisted by the sudden wrench that she could not dance at all that night; but this did not keep Harry from the floor. Nearly every dance she saw him lead some brilliant girl to the charmed circle, and yet every unemployed opportunity found him by her side, full of excuses at being obliged to dance the Lancers with that tiresome Miss Bell, while his heart longed to rest by the side of his adored Bessie.

Seeing her evident loneliness, Reginald Murray had taken a vacant seat by her side, thus cheering her by his kindness, and enlivening her by his intelligent and interesting conversation. She chided herself as the thought would intrude—"Why is not Harry like Mr. Murray? why does he cultivate levity instead of intelligence?" Then dismissing the question as heretical to her affiance, she turned her eyes away from the latter's tall form, as he bent languidly over Maud Henderson, or flirted with handsome Bella Braddon. She was glad when the company dispersed, and as soon as Harry bade her

good-night, she ran to her own room, to throw aside her white silk and point lace, her diamonds and her drooping flowers, and folding around her soft merino wrapper, she gave herself up to thoughts full of deepest anxiety.

" Bessie, I am sorry indeed to see you thus afflicted," exclaimed good Mrs. Singleton, as she observed the tears upon the cheeks of her niece. " You cannot thus grieve over fancied troubles. Have you told me all that distresses you?"

" I have not, Aunt Margaret, but I will hasten to do so now. As I stood alone for a moment near the supper-table this evening, my attention was drawn—by hearing the sound of my own name—to the conversation of two young gentlemen with whom I am but slightly acquainted.

" Too bad, is it not, Eckhart," exclaimed the elder of the pair, " for such a warm-hearted, beautiful girl as Bessie Sherwood, to be courted for her money?"

" Are you sure Harry Wetmore seeks that alone?"

" Yes, indeed; he is utterly heartless."

" I heard no more, for the speakers passed onward; but, Auntie, I am resolved now to be certain that wealth is not his object, before I allow the marriage vows to be breathed."

" How can you possibly discover that, pet?" asked Mrs. Singleton, anxiously.

A few moments of deep silence ensued, then, starting to her feet, excitement flashing from her dark eyes, the beautiful girl exclaimed:

" Now, Aunt Margaret, the very idea has dawned upon me. Do not oppose me, but lend your assistance, and I will soon convince myself whether Harry is mercenary or otherwise."

Sitting close by the side of her almost mother, Bessie unfolded the bright idea, and from the sly laughs and wise inclinations of the head, an observer might surmise that the whispered conversation which ensued had met the warm approval of the elder lady.

The next morning early the two ladies ordered their carriage for a highly important shopping-excursion; and when they returned, just two hours later, the number and size of the parcels that emerged from the carriage, and disappeared within the house, was certainly marvellous indeed.

For two or three days after this the expert and pretty fingers of Bessie Sherwood were constantly employed cutting and fitting the most curious articles of an old woman's costume, while her aunt willingly assisted the excited girl. Then an old, dilapidated house was rented for a month, and it being near by, these same mysterious garments were transported thither in the evening hours, after which the doors were securely fastened, and the key duly dropped into the pocket of the young girl.

" Well, Aunt Margaret, I believe all is ready, even to cap, spectacles and cane: so now all that remains to be done is to array myself in my ancient costume, and launch out on a voyage of discovery. Woe betide a certain gentleman's dreams of golden bliss, if these discoveries prove what I fear they will."

" Hallo, driver, where now? We are full already!" shouted our friend Harry Wetmore, as he sat in a somewhat well-filled omnibus one clear, cold morning in February.

" Only to take in an old lady by the name of Grimes, who ordered me to stop for her at this hour," replied the driver, as he halted in front of a poor little house in Orange Street, just as an extremely aged female emerged from the door and advanced to the side of the vehicle.

She was respectably clothed in a black merino dress, long black cloak, deep, old-fashioned bonnet, which, together with the wide bordered cap and large spectacles, almost hid the face of the honest wearer, whose uncertain, feeble steps were guided by the strong cane upon which she leaned.

" Go on, driver!" exclaimed Harry in angry tones. " I tell you we are full already, and there is no room for that old rheumatic. Start on, can't you? Who is going to wait for her to crawl in?"

As the driver still halted, and the old lady still advanced, Harry shouted:

" Driver, I say no more shall get in! Do you hear?"

" Fie! Harry, be quiet. The old lady can take my seat; I had just as soon stand, or sit with the driver."

So saying, Reginald Murray sprang to the ground, and gently assisting the feeble form of the aged woman to his place, he shut the door amid the jeering laughs of his late companions.

The village of Silverdell, where the events of our story took place, although it might be difficult for our readers to find upon a map, was situated about thirty miles from a flourishing town, not at all material to the interest of our tale.

Being but an hour and a half's ride by rail, many of the gentlemen daily repaired to that place to transact business, returning at night; thus enjoying the commercial benefit of the great metropolis, as well as the charms of fresh air and rural pleasures. This will account for both Reginald and Harry being in the omnibus on the way to the station, as both were engaged in business.

"Much obliged, young man," exclaimed Mrs. Grimes, as the passengers were all deposited on the platform; and she approached the gentleman who stood waiting for the train; "much obliged, I say, I am for that seat of yours this morning. I am certain Hannah Maria, my daughter, and Mercy Pernier, my sister, whom I am going to see, would thank you too, if they knew how kind you were to a poor creature like me. They would almost be scared to death if I hadn't come."

"You are welcome, madam!" returned Reginald, respectfully, while his companion shrugged his shoulders, and muttered:

"Hang the old woman with her thanks! Here comes the train—let us hurry to secure seats!"

Starting to follow his companion, Reginald noticed the feeble attempts of Mrs. Grimes to reach the train, and his compassion would not allow him to leave her unprotected; therefore, going to her assistance, he guided her, and finally gave her one of the seats which, by turning the back around, Harry had prepared for his little party—which would occupy three, leaving one vacant.

It was in this vacant seat Reginald placed this aged dame.

"Thunder and Mars, if that be not cool! What on earth did you bring that old woman here for?" angrily exclaimed Harry. "By Jove! if there were another seat to be had on this crowded train, I would leave you to enjoy her society alone."

"Stop—she will hear you," returned Reginald. "All old people are deaf."

"But she is most decidedly," said Harry. "Do you not observe that ear-trumpet in her hand? That is a sure sign that she is as deaf as a stone."

"Poor thing! It is well for her sake that she cannot hear your remarks. But, to change the subject, what shall you do to-night? Join me in a ride?"

"No, by Jupiter! I must go to-night and pay my respects to the heiress. Deuced bore, this courting business. If it were not for the golden bait I would soon be out of this predicament, I assure you."

Reginald was silent, while the young man who occupied the other seat, remarked:

"Ha, ha, that is a good one! Pretend to be a martyr, when we all know how enamoured you are of la belle Bessie."

"I tell you I am not a particle in love with anything but the money-bags of the damsel. I scorn the soft imputation."

"I cannot see," quietly remarked Reginald, "how you can speak so slightly of that gentle and amiable girl."

"Well, if you will sign over the bank-notes, I will resign the amiable lady to you."

"Had it not been for those same bank-notes, I should have tried to win her for myself, before you ever saw her, Hal."

"What do you mean? Surely, money is no objection in your eyes, is it?" inquired Harry, evidently much astonished.

"The most decided objection. I have always declared that I would never marry for riches."

"Well, I cannot say the same. I care not what is said, so that Bessie Sherwood's cool fifty thousand is transferred to my keeping."

Here a violent fit of coughing seized upon the feeble frame of poor Mrs. Grimes; so, taking some peppermint lozenges from her capacious pocket, she put one in her mouth, then passed the paper to the young men.

"Help yourselves, gentlemen. They are very nice, depend on it. Hannah Maria brought 'em when she was here some time ago. Have some?"

To please the old lady, Reginald took a couple, and the rest having declined them, she returned the paper to her pocket, just as the train whirled into the station at ——.

Here there was a general rush—Harry and his chums being the foremost; but Reginald quietly assisted Mrs. Grimes from the train; and after patiently listening to her profuse thanks, he also disappeared.

The very next train carried back the old woman to Silverdell, and, as she entered the ruin of a house, something very like a smothered laugh burst from the shaking sides of the ancient dame.

A few moments later, Bessie Sherwood appeared in the same doorway, and took her way demurely to her own elegant mansion.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed Harry Wet-

more, as, one week later, he answered a knock at his bedroom door, and received from the waiter a carefully-sealed and perfumed epistle.

Opening it, his handsome features turned pale with rage, as he dashed the letter to the floor, and uttering a dreadful oath, commenced pacing the room.

"Confound it!" he muttered, "what deuced luck is mine! Wasted all this time, playing the lover to that girl, and now, when I thought the worst was over, hang it! if her uncle don't speculate with her money, and lose—thus ruining the whole thing. 'Do I,' she writes, 'under the changed circumstances, in which she now finds herself, still wish to continue our engagement? or, would it suit me better to be released?' Ha! ha! poor simpleton, did she think I would marry her without the gold? If she did, she laboured under a mistake, and I will write at once and undeceive her."

Snatching up a pen the infuriated man dashed off a few lines, regretting the necessity he lay under of withdrawing from the engagement, that had afforded him so much pleasure, but since prospects seemed to have materially changed, he must avail himself of her kind offer, and remain henceforth merely her true friend and well-wisher.

When Bessie Sherwood received this disgraceful letter, not a tear escaped her hazel eyes, but softly she murmured, "Heaven be praised that I am free from that man! Reginald Murray will hear the news, of course, of our broken engagement and my loss of fortune. Will he seek me now?"

He did seek her before many days had passed, and the rich blush that suffused her cheeks at meeting his ardent glance—the wild flutter of her heart at his approach—gave evidence that his coming would not be in vain.

One morning Bessie was handed a note from Mr. Murray, inviting her to ride with him; and hastily penning an acceptance, she despatched it, and then counted the hours that would ensue before the expected pleasure.

Seated thus by the side of sweet Bessie Sherwood, with the pale stars shining upon them, and the cold moonlight glittering upon the rounded snow-banks, and long icicles hanging from trees and fences, the lips of Reginald were parted with glowing words of love and devotion.

Yes, there in the moonlight and starlight, gliding quickly over the smooth, icy surface of the earth, did Bessie breathe the low "Yes" that won for her own the bravest, best, and handsomest man in Silverdell—won, too, after the fashion of her own heart, without a thought of money to disturb the quiet of their betrothal.

In due time the wedding came off. Although intended to be very quiet, after all it was something of an affair.

The bride looked bewitchingly beautiful; and the bridegroom seemed to be the happiest of men—and, between you and me, reader, his happiness was not at all seeming, but a veritable reality.

After the ceremony and the congratulations were over, the bride excused herself for a few moments, promising soon to return. During her temporary absence the parlour door opened, and a curious, nearly double old lady, leaning upon a cane, was ushered in, and with trembling steps advanced to the side of the bridegroom.

It was no other than our old friend Mrs. Grimes.

"Who ever supposed I'd be coming to your wedding, young man? Curious, ain't it? But, goodness gracious, I heard that you were getting married, so, says I, I will step in and just congratulate that generous youngster who was so kind to an old creature like me. So I wish eternal joy and a first-rate wife. But which of these pretty girls is the bride?"

"She will be here presently, Mrs. Grimes," shouted the young man in the old woman's trumpet, "I am very glad to see you so well."

"Well, yes; surprising for one of my time of life. But I must tell you wedding folks how I came to be interested in you, I suppose. One day, I set out to visit my daughter, Hannah Maria, so I ordered the omnibus to stop and carry me to the train next morning. But gracious sakes alive, a young man said I shouldn't get in as it was all full. However, this young man took my part and gave me his place. Then he helped me to a seat in the train, and there I heard the first one boast that he was going to marry for money, and that all he wanted was Miss Bessie Sherwood's bank-notes. This youngster took the girl's part, and gave the other a piece of his mind. Then I came home."

Here a violent fit of laughter fairly overcame Mother Grimes, and during the convulsive efforts to restrain herself, spectacles, bonnet, cap, and cane flew across the room, and Bessie, the absent bride, stood before them.

Such a time as there was upon discovering the

trick and such surprise on Reginald's part when he found his ancient traveller to be no other than his bonnie bride, and also heard that the speculations only amounted to one thousand pounds, and that he had wooed and wedded an heiress after all, was perfectly beyond description. Suffice it to say, that the story went the rounds of that village before night, and all rejoiced in Reginald Murray's good fortune.

As for Harry Wetmore, Silverdell became too hot a place for him, and he therefore suddenly disappeared to parts unknown, and nothing farther was heard of him for six months—when it was whispered about that he went to London, became acquainted with and married a reputed heiress, and afterwards discovered that he had been sold, as the girl was rich in nothing but vanity and ill-temper.

Poor Harry Wetmore! The biter was bitten in his case. "Served him right," whispered Mrs. Wisecare, the village oracle, to Miss Tattler, the busbody of the place. "Such a simpleton as he showed himself to be deserved to be taken in, and I for one am glad of it."

Exit Miss Tattler to circulate the news.

E. T.

THE WIFE'S SURPRISE.

"The fact is, my dear Mrs. Lynde, your children ought not to remain in this poisonous atmosphere a day longer. They are too delicate, madam—altogether too delicate. I regard it as your imperative duty to send them into the country!"

Dr. Carson shut up his ponderous gold eye-glasses as he spoke, with the air of an autocrat whose slightest wishes are a law. Little Carry Lynde, nestling on her sofa, held tight to her mother's hand, and regarded the doctor with wide-open blue eyes. Mrs. Lynde sighed softly.

"I doubt whether Mr. Lynde can afford the expense of sending his family into the country this season, doctor."

"Afford it, ma'am! Afford it? Why, all the world knows how fast your husband is making money, and—excuse me, Mrs. Lynde, but I am a plain man—all tendencies to a parsimonious life ought to be checked in the bud."

Mrs. Lynde blushed an indignant crimson.

"Dr. Carson, I do not like to hear that word applied to my husband."

The doctor took his hat. "The powder at eleven—perfect quiet, and my little patient will do very well. And remember what I recommend to you about the country!"

After the doctor had taken his departure, Mrs. Lynde sat thinking on what he had said.

"Charles is a poor man," she mused—"a man who is dependent on his practice as a lawyer for daily bread. I knew it when I married him—not have I ever regretted leaving the luxury of Beech Grove for his humbler, quieter home. And as for my Charles being parsimonious, I know better."

The rosy glow was still mantling Mrs. Lynde's cheek at the bare idea, when a cheery voice sounded on her ear.

"Well, how is Carry to-night?"

"Charles, is it you? How you startled me!"

He was a frank, noble-looking man, with clear dark eyes, and a smile that brightened his whole face.

"Am I so very startling? What does the doctor say?"

"He says the children must all go into the country this summer with as little delay as possible."

Mr. Lynde slightly contracted his brows.

"I am not sure that we can afford it, Alice."

"That is what I thought, myself—but, oh, Charles, if their health—perhaps their life—depends upon it, ought we to hesitate?"

Mr. Lynde sat down, whistling quietly under his breath.

"No, I suppose not—but, Alice, it's a terrible drain on a man's purse just now!"

Alice Lynde felt a cold chill at her heart—was it possible that Dr. Carson's words had a foundation in truth?

Was her husband becoming a prey to the terrible dragon of avarice. Mr. Lynde continued:

"I suppose I must try to find some farmhouse where they won't charge the children's weight in gold. Alice, do you never sigh after the velvet lawns and shady copse of Beech Grove—the old house, with its cool verandahs, and the summer-harbour by the lake?"

"No!" said Mrs. Lynde, stoutly.

"Never, Alice?"

"Well,—sometimes I can't help thinking how nice it would be for the children. I wonder if the old man who owns it now has any children."

"A childless widower, I believe. But all this has very little to do with the question of your summer exile. Of course, you'll need no extra wardrobe to

go to a farmhouse, where there are no fashionable dames and demoiselles to criticise your toilet?"

"Carry and Lucy have quite outgrown their last summer's clothes, Charles, and Frank has nothing at all to wear. I suppose I might get along, although I need a new travelling-dress sadly."

"Try to dispense with it at present, that's a dear little economical pess."

"Charles," said Mrs. Lynde, speaking up suddenly from the impulse of her heart, "is not your business prosperous at present?"

"Prosperous? Yes."

"Then why do you perpetually urge upon me the necessity of economy?"

He coloured a little—she thought he appeared somewhat confused at her abrupt question.

"There are a great many outlets for our money, Alice, of which you can scarcely form an adequate idea. Eight o'clock, is it? Then I must be off. Good night, my love—I'll try to be at home before eleven!"

Mrs. Lynde was sitting by Carry's sofa, at her work, the next day, when Miss Priscilla Forbes was ushered in.

"Good morning, my dear—how's Carry? Better, eh? Well, I'm glad to hear it. Bethiah Lamb's little girl was taken with just the same symptoms, and she didn't live three days! I'd advise you to be careful though, Alice—there's always danger of a relapse, and no one can foretell the consequences of a relapse! By the way, where has your husband gone to-day?"

"Is he not at his office?"

"No—he went by the railroad this morning. I saw him go by as if his life depended on the haste he was making; and thinks I to myself, I'll just keep an eye on him, and see where he is going! So I followed as fast as I could trot, and was just in time to see him get into the train. What he's going out of town for I don't know; but thinks I to myself again, Alice can tell me all about it!"

"Probably he is looking for some summer retreat for the children," said Mrs. Lynde, coldly. But she remembered, with a pang, that her husband had said nothing to her about it.

"Charles," she said, when he came home to dinner, "where were you going out of town, to-day?"

"How did you know I was out of town?" he asked, a little sharply.

"Miss Priscilla Forbes saw you start."

"I wish Miss Priscilla Forbes would be kind enough to mind her own business!"

Alice was silent a minute, then she asked:

"Did you find a place for the children?"

"No," was his brief reply.

Alice inquired no farther—she felt hurt and resentful, and Charles paid no attention to her silence. If he could only have witnessed the burst of passionate tears to which she gave way, when she was alone by the couch of her sleeping little ones!

The farmhouse to which she and her children were banished for the summer was not a particularly inviting spot—well shaded, however, with a stream of running water through the grounds, and plenty of fresh meat and vegetables; but Alice Lynde felt the lack of cheerful and congenial society, the unvaried monotony of the uneventful life, and pined secretly, even while Frank, Carry, and little Lucy were growing rosy, sunburned, and healthy.

"I wish Charles could spend a little more of his time here," thought she.

And it was scarcely to be wondered at that she recurred sometimes with a thrill of yearning to the old days when she was an heiress under the spreading linden trees of beautiful Beech Grove! For Charles Lynde's sake she had given up her beautiful home—had dared her uncle's threat—afterwards carried relentlessly into effect—of disinheritance; had submitted to all the trials and evils which must necessarily surround a poor man's wife—and now Charles left her alone to amuse herself as best she might.

So, while the children grew fat and rosy, Alice became thin and pale.

"He will come to-night," she thought, one Saturday evening, as she brushed her glossy golden hair into the shining bands he best liked, and put on his favourite blue muslin dress, with a turquoise brooch in the blue ribbon that set off the transparent whiteness of her throat. "Oh, it seems an age since I saw him last!"

But instead of her husband's presence, the train brought only a note, hurried and brief:

"DEAR ALICE: I cannot come to-night—business is too pressing. Love to the children. C. L."

The note fell from Alice's fingers—a sickening sensation came over her heart.

"And I had watched for him so anxiously. Oh! can it be possible that he has ceased to love me? me, who gave up everything for his sake!"

On Monday a letter from Dr. Carson was brought

to Mrs. Lynde—a letter enclosing a letter from her husband.

"Please give this to Mr. Lynde," wrote the doctor; "I was at his office twice on Saturday afternoon trying to find him, but the doors were closed, and the clerk told me he had gone into the country. Tell him he's a lazy fellow to neglect his business so, when it is making him rich so fast."

Alice Lynde read the words three times over before she fairly took in their whole meaning.

"He has deceived me," she thought. "It was not the convenient plea of business that kept him away from me! Oh, Charles, Charles! and has it come to this?"

She sat down, still clasping the letter in her unconscious hand, and gazed vacantly out upon the sunny landscape that lay before her.

"If it were not for the children—if it were not for my little ones, I would go away and never look upon his face again! He loves me no longer—the affection I so blindly deemed my own is transferred to some other object—and why should I care what becomes of me? Only—the children!"

And as blue-eyed Carry ran up to her to ask some trifling question, Mrs. Lynde drew the child closer to her heart and burst into tears.

"Mamma!" exclaimed the astonished little girl, why do you cry? Are you ill, mamma?"

"Ill! yes," sobbed poor Alice, "I am sick of living. I am sick at heart, child."

And a plentiful shower of tears helped to relieve her overcharged heart.

"I will endure it for the sake of these little ones; I will suffer on, and try to be silent," thought poor Alice, pressing both hands over her aching bosom.

The next week Mr. Lynde was to come and take his family home. Alice looked forward to the day with a shrinking expectation. She longed for the hour of their meeting, and yet she dreaded it.

In this nervous state of excitement she came to the door, leading little Lucy, as the carriage wheels grated over the stony country road, and stopped in front of the old-fashioned portico.

But Charles was not there—only the driver—who touched his hat with an awkward attempt at politeness, as he descended from the box.

"If you please, ma'am, Mr. Lynde couldn't come—but he'll be there to meet you."

More neglect! Alice answered not a word, but the hands with which she tied the blue ribbons of Lucy's hat trembled sorely, and her lip would quiver, in spite of the resolute little white teeth that held it down!

The little ones laughed, chatted and played in the carriage as it rolled along, exclaiming loudly at the various objects on the road, but Alice leaned back in the corner, pale and silent, seeing nothing but the fantastic visions of her own fevered mind. Once or twice the idea crossed her brain that the journey was rather longer than she had expected, but she did not reason at all on the subject, relapsing at once into painful reflections.

"Mamma, oh, mamma! what a pretty place!" chorused the three children at once. "There's a tall white statue behind those fir-trees, and a fountain all sparkling like diamonds, and oh, mamma, such beautiful beds of flowers!"

Alice, roused from her thoughts for the instant, leaned forward and gazed out of the window.

Surely there was something familiar in those green terraces, with their flights of marble steps, in the Doric columns of the majestic stone porch, before which the carriage suddenly came to a halt.

"Am I dreaming?" she thought, looking vaguely around her, "or is this really Beech Grove?"

She went up the steps, feeling as if she were moving through the uncertain fancies of a dream. But in the vestibule stood reality itself, in the shape of her husband, with a face of bright, enraptured happiness!

"My dearest wife," he murmured, folding her tenderly in his arms, "the time has come for me to restore to you what you gave up so cheerfully for my sake years ago. Welcome once again to your home, Alice!"

"Home!" she repeated, gazing up into his eyes, as if she scarcely credited the evidence of her own senses.

"Yes, home indeed! I have purchased Beech Grove, Alice, and furnished it just to suit your taste! My cherished little wife, I am rewarded now for the years of economy—the extra work—the self-denial which I have been obliged to practise!"

"Charles," she whispered, growing scarlet and pale alternately, "was it this that kept you away from me?—that occasioned your absence last week?"

"I was determined to bring you here, Alice, when I took you away from that cramped little farmhouse.

There have been countless delays—innumerable difficulties—but I have conquered them all! Welcome to your home, my precious wife!"

And as he took her once more to his heart, Alice Lynde's happiness was mingled with the keenest pang of remorse she had ever known!

Sitting in the handsome familiar rooms that evening, with the moonlight streaming through the stained glass windows, her children asleep upstairs in the nursery that had once been hers, and Charles beside her, Alice vowed to herself the best resolution a wedded wife can make—never, never again to let the least shadow come between herself and her confidence in her husband's love!

A. R.

SIR ALVICK

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. HASSAN WHARLE viewed the amazement of the baronet with great coolness, and nodding his head with each word of his reply, said:

"Yes, Sir Alvick, I claim to be the son of Aspa Jarles and Harlow Clayton, and as you are the said Harlow Clayton, I am your son and heir, legally entitled to inherit, after you, the title, with all entailed lands, tenements, demesnes, things corporeal and incorporeal, real, personal or mixed, heirlooms, hereditaments, water-rights appertaining—"

"Silence this jargon!" commanded Sir Alvick, sternly. "Your assertion is too preposterous for belief. What, a human lizard like you my son! Nonsense! Do you know that that claim has been set up by some one else?"

"Eh?" said Mr. Hassan, raising his eyebrows. "By somebody else?"

"Yes, you are not the first nor the only claimant for my paternity. Captain Hugh De Lisle told me that Sir Alvick Ulster was his father."

"Captain Hugh De Lisle, he is dead!" echoed Mr. Hassan, reflectively. "Well, it may be—why not? You may have as many sons as old Priam, of Troy, for all I know or care, but you never had but one legitimate son, and I am that son. You may not fancy me as a son—very natural, very, you know. But you will learn to like me. You must, for if you do not treat me as a son, mark my words, Sir Alvick, I will be the worst enemy you ever had."

Mr. Hassan said this so coolly and firmly that his manner began to startle the baronet.

"I am not a madman, nor a fool," continued Mr. Hassan. "I should be sorry to say all I have with no proof of my assertion. Listen. I have the marriage certificate, the deposition of witnesses to the marriage. I can, within a day, tap a gentleman upon the shoulder, and say: 'Here, you too were present when a son was born to Aspa Jarles. You were witness of her marriage to Harlow Clayton. You were her servant before and after her marriage, and you know that I am the infant you saw born.' I can produce a score of letters in your handwriting, signed Harlow Clayton, and in all of them you are a very loving and a very devoted husband to Aspa Jarles. I can produce Aspa Jarles herself, and she can produce a thousand proofs which I have no time to mention. In short, I can convict you of bigamy before any jury in England."

Sir Alvick was much moved by these threats, for guilt made him cowardly before Hassan Wharle. The amazed baronet could hardly believe himself awake. Here he was bearded, threatened, terrified in his own house, at a time when all seemed secure, as regarded his past life—threatened, terrified by a hideous anatomy of an attorney, who even claimed to be his legitimate son and heir.

Then there was Captain Hugh De Lisle, who had also claimed to be his son, though by what mother Sir Alvick had not heard. He was exceedingly anxious to hear, however, and was very sorry that his interview with Hugh De Lisle had been so abruptly and unsatisfactorily terminated.

It would be a formidable fact should Hugh De Lisle prove that he was the legitimate son of Sir Alvick Ulster, but a mere trifle compared to Sir Alvick's being forced to admit, even to himself, that this ugly fellow, Hassan Wharle, was his lawful flesh and blood, his son, his heir!

Sir Alvick gazed at Hassan Wharle with feelings of fear and disgust. He could compare him to nothing less loathsome than a spider, a serpent, an earth-worm, armed with venom—ugly, creeping, coiling, poisonous.

"Great heaven!" he thought, as he stared at the undisturbed lawyer. "What if this creature should be my son? Aspa Jarles was my wife—did bear me a son! All that is true, but that this hideous creature is that son—I cannot believe it! All this has come upon me too suddenly. I must have time to think. Lady Matilda does not suspect that

I was ever married to anyone but her. Dare I lay all this before her?"

"Think quickly, Sir Alvick," said Mr. Hassan, nodding at the baronet. "Of course, you know, I would prefer to have the matter settled quietly, all in the family, you know—no law, no costs of court, no worry, no scandal, no exposure, and all that. But that is all your choice, for the thing is fact, and can easily be proved. Don't care particularly about having a stir made in the matter—looks unnatural for a son to sue his father for bigamy—very. Think quickly. I do—always did. Act quickly, too—I do. Always will."

"Have you ever addressed Miss Evaline?" asked the baronet, scarcely knowing what to say. "I think you intimated that you were in love with her."

"Madly," replied Mr. Hassan. "Can't say that I have ever courted her. Seen her often, of late, while I was secretly preparing this surprise for you. Think she has seen me. Met her in Ulsterborough 'other day—she was walking with Lady Matilda. Bow'd to her. Think she laughed. Perhaps it was a smile. Nothing ridiculous in my appearance, you know. But need not speak of Miss Evaline. Don't think she loves Lord Peter—"

"Why? How do you know that, sir?"

"I have eyes. I am sure she hates him. Saw her looking at him several times, when he did not know it. If ever a lady's face said, 'There is a man whom I detest,' Miss Evaline's did. But need not speak of that now. Don't intend that Lord Fitz-Osborn shall annoy her, after you and I have settled our little family affairs."

"Then you are acquainted with Lord Peter?"

"Slightly," replied Mr. Hassan, knitting his brows, and Sir Alvick started as he recognized in that frown an astonishing resemblance to the frown of Aspa Jarles, as he remembered her face when she was in wrath.

The baronet had been studying and examining that ugly face minutely, seeking among its premature wrinkles and thin muscles for a feature or expression like any he had ever seen in the face of Aspa Jarles, or like any in his own.

Until Hassan Wharle knitted his brows, throwing back his beaver with a toss as he did so, Sir Alvick had found not even the slightest resemblance to either himself or Aspa Jarles.

But as the beaver was tossed back, and a tall, narrow forehead revealed, the baronet felt a chill of terror run through his heart, for he marked the strong resemblance it bore to that of Aspa Jarles.

"Yes, I am acquainted with Lord Peter, slightly," replied Mr. Hassan, knitting his brows, and biting his thin lips as he spoke.

Sir Alvick did not like that champing, fierce biting of the lips. It reminded him alarmingly of Aspa Jarles. He remembered that habit of his first wife very well. Perhaps it was all feverish fancy, he thought, but take the whole face of Hassan Wharle at that moment, when some bitter recollection was crossing his brain, and it did fearfully resemble a distorted vision or picture of Aspa Jarles—as a beautiful face may look when seen through a defective glass—hideous and yet like.

"I intend to be even with Lord Peter some day," said Mr. Hassan. "But that is not my business—"

A rap at the door, a timid rap checked his words.

"Come in," said the deep voice of the baronet, and the same servant who had appeared before, entered, bowed, and delivered to Sir Alvick a salver, upon which was a card.

"The gentleman is below," remarked the servant.

"Major Hark Varly!" exclaimed the baronet, with a glance of distrust at Hassan Wharle. "You have given him a hint."

"I! Not the slightest. I thought I might have to do so—but I didn't," replied Mr. Hassan, firmly. "I hope I never may. That is with you, sir."

"Will you give me a little time to reflect upon what you have told me, Mr. Wharle?"

Mr. Hassan gnawed his long finger-nails, twisted his pointed moustache for a moment, eyeing the baronet keenly the while, and then replied:

"Shall we say an hour?"

"An hour? As well a second. No, I must sleep upon your news, Mr. Wharle."

"Not a very pleasant pillow, but compulsory. Get used to it in time, Sir Alvick. Well, we will say until to-morrow noon."

Mr. Hassan wormed his fingers into his vest, coiled them around one of the clumsy time-pieces of the day, drew it out, squinted at the dial and said:

"Only nine o'clock. Perhaps I give too much time. Man of quick action, I am. Always was. But say until noon—until to-morrow. Sleep in the Manor House, of course?"

"Sir!"

"Certainly. I and my two friends from London, gay fellows, I assure you. Perhaps you would

not object to being introduced to them to-night. Make fast friends you know, and I all that."

Mr. Hassan said this with such a horrible leer that Sir Alvick almost shut his eyes to avoid the sight.

"Fast friends, and all that," repeated Mr. Hassan, nodding with each word. "Never desert a man in trouble. By Harry, that's the very time they stick to a man! Shall I introduce them?"

"No; I do not wish to see them. I will see you in the morning. Clement," said the baronet to the servant, as my quiet has been so much disturbed tonight, I might as well see every one that calls. Go; conduct Major Varly hither. As you pass Roffton, send him up."

Clement, the servant, withdrew, and Mr. Hassan resumed exactly where he had been interrupted.

"Need not speak of Miss Evaline, nor of Lord Peter now. Time enough when our family affairs are settled. As for that, Sir Alvick, I have copies of all my proofs with me—only copies, but true copies. The genuine and original documents are in Ulsterborough."

"And where is Aspa Jarles?"

"Lady Aspa Ulster, you should say," replied Mr. Hassan, nodding. "Oh, don't you wish you knew where she is? oh? Wait, it may be necessary that you should see her."

"I hope not."

"Oh, so do I. I sincerely hope that you and she may never meet. You and she might quarrel. But why does Major Varly desire to see you?"

"Busy yourself with your own affairs, Mr. Hassan. You may find them more difficult to manage than you at present imagine," said Sir Alvick, with an ominous grin—for the smiles of the stern old warrior were all grins, and anything but laughable grins.

So thought Mr. Hassan, who had his own fears and own guilt as well as Sir Alvick. But he was not a man to be daunted suddenly.

"Are you upon speaking terms with Major Varly?" he asked, with a cool impertinence to which Sir Alvick had been a total stranger all his life. Yet it was an impertinence admirable at least for its audacity.

There was a kind of latent power about the man, or in his clear, keen, green eyes, or in that sharp, needle-pointed voice of his, which forced a reply from the baronet.

"I am not upon speaking terms with Major Varly," said Sir Alvick, haughtily. "I never was. He has the reputation of a *rout*, a turf-hunter—"

"He has the reputation of being a dangerous man to trifle with," interrupted Mr. Hassan, raising his eyebrows. "He is no coward, and has served with credit. He has a friend at court, too, for he is a favourite with the wife of the great duke. They say he has been wild, but then it is as easy to slander a man as it is a woman. Why do you dislike him?"

"More impertinence. But the baronet replied:

"I have never seen him. I heard that he was paying attentions to my ward, Miss Evaline Ulster, and I told her to reject his advances."

"Ah, that is easily explained. Your dislike arose from your desire to wed your ward to Lord Peter," said Mr. Hassan, grinning. "Lord Peter has a far worse reputation than Major Varly, you know. But never fear for your ward, so far as Major Varly is concerned, for he does not love Miss Evaline, and the report that he did so was false. I say so."

He said this with an air and emphasis excessively overbearing, but the baronet, who had his own plans in view, and very deep ones too, showed no displeasure.

"By the way," continued the insolent lawyer, and perhaps heir to Ulster, "who is Hark Varly?"

"He hails from Munster, Ireland," replied the baronet.

"So I have heard. But I have been in Munster, made inquiries—never heard of his parents there—I did of him."

"You did of him?"

"Of him? yes. He fought a duel there."

"Ah! With whom?"

"With Captain Hugh De Lisle."

Captain Hugh De Lisle, hearing everything in his concealment, could not but think:

"Who is this strange fellow who seems to know so much about me and everybody else? Hassan Wharle? I do not remember the name, I cannot see the man, and yet I think I have heard the squeaking voice."

"They fought about a very trifling affair," continued Mr. Hassan. "They were both on recruiting service, and there was some rivalry between them in gaining recruits for their respective companies. The major was a captain then, and he said something about Hugh De Lisle's origin—said he was the son of nobody. De Lisle heard of it and sent him a challenge in these words:

"This son of nobody is a better man than Hark Varly, who, for all that anyone can swear, is also the son of nobody."

"What did he mean by that?" asked the baronet, as a short, powerfully built and sour-looking man entered at the open door.

"He meant what report has always said, that Hark Varly could find his mother at court, but that his father could not be found anywhere."

"Roffton," said the baronet, addressing the man who had just entered, "this gentleman is a lawyer, named—what is the matter with you, man?"

The last words of the baronet were caused by the sharp and stifled ejaculation of the man as Mr. Hassan suddenly turned his face towards him.

John Roffton was short, stout, and fierce of visage, surly in eye and men—one who reminded everybody of a snarling, malicious cur, ready to snap and bite, and always growling. The other servants of the baronet shrank from all familiarity with him—were afraid of him. There was no mildness in him. He was coarse, harsh, and implacable. He was said to be treacherous, grasping, greedy and ferocious. He was thought sly, and cunning, and was always turning up in dark corners when least looked for. But report slandered him.

In short, he was a very unpleasant fellow to everybody; hated by all and hating everybody—except Sir Alvick. He had a profound admiration for the stern, powerful, vigorous baronet, and very little fear of him either.

It was a belief among the servants of the Manor, that John Roffton feared neither God, man nor devil.

However that might be, he certainly turned very pale, and trembled violently when Mr. Hassan half uncoiled himself from his chair, and faced him suddenly.

"I thought it was he that passed me in the hall," muttered Roffton, staring at the lawyer, "and then again I thought it wasn't. But it was, and here the devil is, in Ulster Manor—after me, no doubt. But I'll die game and give him a fight for it, if he—"

"What are you muttering, Roffton?" demanded the baronet, severely. "Do you know each other?"

"Never saw the man until this instant, in all my life," replied Mr. Hassan.

John Roffton heaved a deep sigh of relief. Mr. Hassan Wharle was before him, unexpectedly as a ghost, but he was not there to injure him.

"The gentleman is a total stranger to me," growled Roffton, in a voice which made Hugh De Lisle start. He had heard that voice often, or one exactly like it. He yearned eagerly to see the man, but he dared not peep from his concealment.

"He is a servant in the house," he thought. "I shall make it point to see him very soon. Roffton? That was not the name of the man I knew, but the voice is the same. Roffton? I will remember the name. It is very strange that his voice is so exactly like Starley's—very strange."

"If you never saw him before," remarked the baronet, suspiciously, "why did you start and change colour?"

"Because, your honour, I thought for a minute he was the devil," replied Roffton, with a grin, and that was a rare affair with him. "He do look uncommonly like some pictures I have seen of King Beelzebub, meaning no offence to anybody."

The explanation lulled the rising suspicions of the baronet, and it pleased him too, for he had the same conceit in his mind. There was, indeed, something wicked in the exterior of Mr. Hassan Wharle, and still more so in his interior.

"Roffton," thought Mr. Hassan, eyeing the man carelessly, "I owe you something sharp for that speech, but I think you knew of no other way to explain your recognition of a man who can hang you for housebreaking. So you are here, eh? Well, I may have use for you too."

"Roffton," said the baronet, "you will see to the comfort of Mr. Wharle and his two followers below. Should you meet Lady Matilda on your way to your room, Mr. Wharle—"

"Oh, I shall make myself agreeable, I assure you, Sir Alvick," interrupted Mr. Hassan. "Perhaps it would be presuming too far to ask her, as your honoured guest, you know, and all that, to permit me to enjoy the company of Miss Evaline at supper. I am as hungry as a regiment of bears—"

"Ye don't have the look of ever having eaten a thimbleful of anything juicier than cobwebs all your born days," thought John Roffton.

"Roffton, you will see that ample refreshment is quickly served for Mr. Wharle," said the baronet, writhing beneath the menacing familiarity of the lawyer. "As for Miss Evaline, sir, she has already retired."

The sound of approaching footsteps were now heard, and Mr. Hassan uncoiled himself from the chair with a sinuosity truly miraculous, stood erect, and muttered:

"I suppose that is Major Varly coming. Well, perhaps it is not necessary for him to know that I am in the house. We have never met, but I have a feeling, as if we should not be the best of friends. Good night, Sir Alvick, and pleasant dreams upon that pillow we spoke of. Come, Roffton, lead the way. To-morrow, at noon, Sir Alvick, though—but I might as well not meet Major Varly—good night, and ha! ha! very pleasant dreams of unpleasant realities."

With these words Mr. Hassan glided from the study, just in time to avoid meeting the erect and soldierly-looking gentleman whom Clement introduced as:

"Major Hark Varly, sir."

CHAPTER IX.

SIR ALVICK had assumed his customary harsh and haughty expression of features, before Major Varly entered.

He could not surmise why the officer should have desired an interview with him. It might be something connected with Eveline, or with the presence of Hassan Wharle. In either case the interview would be unpleasant, and therefore the baronet, already angered by the events of the night, assumed an expression of countenance by no means attractive.

It might be, he thought, that Major Varly desired Sir Alvick's Ulster's well-known influence at court to help him to some advance in rank.

"If so," thought the baronet, "I will very soon send him to the right-about, for I wish to speak with Lady Matilda. I wish to think. I am sorry that I told Clement to show him up."

All these reflections flashed through the mind of Sir Alvick in an instant, even as he haughtily returned the somewhat stately bow of the visitor.

Clement was about to withdraw, with his usual noiseless haste, when the baronet said:

"See to it, Clement, that Roffton is ready to be with me at any moment. Send some one with a lantern to look for my dress, sword, and pistols in the yard below. I—but that is all. Go."

Sir Alvick then deigned to honour his visitor with a glance of inquiry for the first time, and almost sank back into his chair as he met the steady, overpowering gaze of a pair of very handsome eyes, dark, sparkling, and daring."

"Close the door, if you please," said the baronet, striding to the window, and hurriedly opening it.

He thrust his head from the window, and inhaled deep draughts of the strong breeze without. There was something in the expression of the major's eyes which had pierced to his very marrow, making brain and heart reel and throb.

For an instant the baronet thought he was stifling, so suddenly had the heat come upon his blood and brain.

"Good heavens!" thought he, as he gazed into the deep darkness of the night, yet thinking of the face of his visitor. "What does all this mean? De Lisle alive! De Lisle claiming to be my son! This visit of the attorney! The attorney ready to prove himself my heir! The ring in the glove of De Lisle! The visit of Major Varly! Who is he? Whence got he those eyes—or rather that expression of his eyes? Is he an enemy? Does he come as a friend?"

Major Varly, who had not observed the agitation of the baronet, closed the door, in compliance with his request, and awaited his pleasure.

Major Hark Varly, clad in the full regiments of a major of cavalry, glistening in gold and scarlet, small, but symmetrical and stately, presented a marked contrast to the tall, lean, black-clad Mr. Hassan Wharle, who had just vanished from the room.

There was not much that was noble in his handsome, though rather effeminate features, yet the habitual expression was cold and proud. He seemed about twenty-five or twenty-six years of age, though his style seemed to declare him older.

His frame was not that of a powerful man, his face would have suited better a woman; for it was fair and delicate, a thin jet-black moustache alone redeeming it from the charge of effeminacy, unless we add the sparkling keenness of a pair of steady, daring eyes, which seemed to challenge any mark or glance of disrespect, from high or low.

Sir Alvick, having recovered from his first surprise, closed the window, through which the wind rushed in violently, and advanced towards the soldier, saying:

"You have business with me, sir?"

"Pardon me, Sir Alvick, for my intrusion. I should not have called upon you had not a matter most important to myself, urged me to ignore the fact that you had conceived a dislike to me, founded only upon idle report," replied Major Varly, in a full deep

voice, hardly to be expected in one whose features were so effeminate.

"The matter must be very important, Major Varly," said the baronet, coldly. "But take a seat, and oblige me by being as brief as possible."

The soldier, whose features flushed with wounded self-esteem, declined a seat, saying sternly:

"What I have to say I will say standing, and since you desire brevity, I will come to the point at once, leaving it to your discretion to repeat to others what I say, or to keep it a secret. I have recently found reason to believe that the perpetrator of a murder committed in this county can be traced to a person at present totally unsuspected by the community in general. You are the magistrate of the county, and I deem it my duty to lay the matter before you."

"Upon business so important as this, Major Varly, of course I must make time to hear you in full," replied the baronet, somewhat startled by the soldier's words, yet evincing no emotion. "Is the murder to which you refer, recent? There has been much lawlessness late in the county, and no less than three murders within a year—though I believe those that are now in prison under accusation, have not attempted to deny their deeds, and rest their several cases upon the plea of self-defence. One arrested for murder to-day is now in confinement in Ulster for keep."

"I do not refer to any crime perpetrated during the past twelve months, Sir Alvick," said the soldier, coldly.

"There was no murder committed the year before last," remarked Sir Alvick, as he glanced over the pages of a large magisterial volume,—"there was one five years ago, I see. But in that instance the accused made confession, and was duly executed."

"The crime to which I desire to call your attention is of older date than five years. It happened in 1687."

"In 1687!" exclaimed Sir Alvick, as a chill of terror began to creep towards his heart. "You cannot mean that you refer to the death of Lord Hayward Fitz-Osborn, the late Marquis of Galmount?"

"I do mean the murder of that nobleman, Sir Alvick."

"Twenty-three years have passed since Lord Hayward died," said the baronet in an icy tone. "You must have been a mere child when he died."

"My informant was not," replied the soldier, whose steady, keen eyes never for an instant left Sir Alvick's face.

"Your informant!"

"My informant—one who witnessed the deed," said the soldier.

"Was there a witness?" asked the baronet, still retaining his usual calmness.

"May I ask the name of that witness?" he added, after a pause, during which he studied the face of the soldier as intently and as resolutely as the soldier did his.

"The witness was a woman."

"A woman?"

"A lady. Were she in possession of her rights she would now be called Lady Ulster."

"Sir, you are here to insult me," exclaimed the baronet sharply.

"I speak of one whom you knew well when she was called Aspa Jarles," continued the soldier calmly.

The baronet stiffed a cry of terror. He gazed at the speaker for an instant, and then bounding to the door, locked it, thrust the key into his bosom, drew his sword, and confronting the soldier, said fiercely:

"By heaven, you are Aspa Jarles!"

"Not I," replied the major, calmly, though his sword was clashing with that of the desperate baronet's instantly; "I am the son of the man whom Aspa Jarles saw you assassinate. I am the legitimate Marquis of Galmont—whose father you and Sir Malcolm Ulster assassinated."

At these words, the sword of the baronet fell from his hand. He staggered to his chair, and sank into it with a deep groan, saying:

"Great heaven! his son! I thought you were Aspa Jarles herself. It is false—as hell!" he cried, regaining his courage; "I did not assassinate Lord Hayward. This is a plot—a plot to ruin me! a plot of a vindictive woman! Why are you here, young man? What proof have you that you are the son of Lord Hayward Fitz-Osborn?"

"Pray calm yourself, Sir Alvick," replied the soldier, coolly. "I am not here to demand vengeance for the murder of my father."

"Then why are you here? I do not for an instant admit—I do not for an instant believe—that you are the son of Lord Hayward," exclaimed the agitated baronet, "but I demand why you are here?"

"To make a demand which you must not refuse,

Sir Alvick—to demand your aid in being placed in full possession of my rights."

"Your rights! What rights?"

"The full possession of the title and estates now usurped by a person who calls himself Lord Peter Fitz-Osborn, Marquis of Galmont," replied the soldier.

"If you, Major Varly, are the son of the late Lord Hayward, you are also the brother of Lord Peter."

"Sir Alvick, that assertion is false, and who knows better that it is false than Lady Matilda and Sir Alvick?"

The words and bearing of the speaker astounded the baronet.

"I mean," added the soldier, significantly, and lowering his voice, "I mean that he who calls himself Lord Peter Fitz-Osborn is not the son of the late Viscount—"

"Sit down, Major Varly," interrupted the baronet, in a bewildered tone, full of helpless terror. "Please state—"

He could say no more, for his emotions of surprise and fear overpowered him.

He did not, he could not believe that this mysterious Major Varly was the son of the late Marquis of Galmont. Major Hark Varly, as he was called, might himself believe that he was the son of the murdered lord, but Sir Alvick, from profound reasons of his own, would not believe, would not admit it for an instant.

But this Major Varly, whoever he was, had said that Aspa Jarles was a witness to the death of Lord Hayward. Perhaps the statement was false; no doubt it was false, or why should Aspa Jarles, whom he had cast off, who was, he knew, a vindictive woman, why, if she had witnessed that death, had she so long been silent?

It was probably false, then, in so far as that was concerned.

But if Aspa Jarles, whose name seemed to have been suddenly conjured from the grave to terrify him, had not witnessed nor heard something, was it that this Major Varly dared accuse him of having aided in the assassination of Lord Hayward?

Where was Aspa Jarles? Was she really alive and secretly at work to overthrow him? Sir Alvick was bewildered. He wanted time to collect his startled faculties.

"Sir Alvick," said the soldier, not sitting down, but leaning over a chair, and speaking with slow, deep emphasis, "I have said that I did not come here to avenge the murder of my father. You and I may be allies, if not friends. Let me relate something which may make you aware that Aspa Jarles—"

"Does she live?" demanded the baronet, abruptly.

"She lives. She is at this moment in Ulster-borough."

"Great heaven!" groaned the baronet, inwardly.

"Let me say something which will convince you that Aspa Jarles has power to disturb you. I will briefly tell you what she has told me—"

"First, Major Varly, please inform me of your own origin," demanded Sir Alvick.

"My origin? I say I am the only legitimate son of the murdered Lord Hayward."

"Oh, yes. I know you say you are, major. Perhaps you may be able to prove all you have had the temerity to say to me. I mean, inform me of your early life. Who reared you? Who gave you the name you bear?"

"You shall learn all that, sir, presently," replied the soldier, coldly. "I wish to tell you what was told to me by Aspa Jarles. I call her by that name, because such was her name when you married her."

Sir Alvick began to think that all his terrible secrets had escaped at once, and become known all over England. He said, sternly:

"I do not believe that I ever married the person you call Aspa Jarles, young man. I wish you to remember that. I was startled by the monstrous accusation you made; I am still amazed by the atrocious calumny, Major Varly. But I will listen to all you have to say, for I begin to think you are a mere tool in the hands of designing persons. But for this belief, which I hope may prove to be true, I should not listen to you a moment."

Sir Alvick uttered these words in a severe, commanding tone, for the very difficulties of his position had rallied his strength of mind. It flashed through his brain that he had been acting very weakly; that he had too readily yielded to the boldness of Hugh De Lisle, to the insolence of Hassan Wharle, and to the audacity of the major. If indeed the crimes of his youth had followed him up like bloodhounds, and brought him to bay in his old age, he would not be torn down without a desperate struggle.

Sir Alvick was sure that Major Varly could not be the son of the murdered lord. He feared that he was the son of some one else once well known to him.

Hugh De Lisle had claimed to be his son. So had Hassan Wharle. But Sir Alvick, as he gazed intently upon the features of Major Hark Varly, said to himself:

"This young man is the son of Aspa Jarles. I know not who his father may have been, I wonder only that he has not claimed me to be his father. He is not the son of Lord Hayward, and he is part of some deep-laid and powerful plot, in which my former connection with Aspa Jarles is to be made an active accessory. It was unnecessary for me to ask if Aspa Jarles were alive. The events of this night, the suddenness and rapidity of these formidable attacks upon me, prove not only that she is alive, but that she is actively at work. But let me listen to this young man."

There was a magnetic power in the now firm and penetrating eyes of the beleaguered baronet, keenly felt by the mind of Major Varly, despite his native audacity and the strength of accusation he possessed.

For an instant his cheek grew pale, and his heart fluttered with alarm, for the expression now presented by the baronet of Ulster was not defensive only—it was terribly menacing in its haughty coldness and severe frown.

"Sir Alvick," he said, shaking off his sudden fear and remembering the strength of his position, "you just now, for an instant, thought me Aspa Jarles herself. You were incited to that belief by fear, guilt, and the resemblance in my features to those of Aspa Jarles, as she looked in her youth. Can you have forgotten that Aspa Jarles and the murdered lord were first cousins, and had many strong family resemblances?"

"He speaks the truth," thought the baronet wincing secretly beneath this sudden attack upon his unexpressed conviction, that Hark Varly was not the son of Lord Hayward. "They were first cousins, and I remember well how report said that they were so much alike as to be instantly recognized, even by strangers, as being of close kin. Perhaps this young man may be the son of the late marquis, and not the son of Aspa Jarles."

He set his teeth firmly together, for at this instant three distinct facts struck his brain with startling keenness.

In the noble features of Hugh De Lisle he had detected a marked resemblance to the features of Aspa Jarles and Lord Hayward.

In the daring though effeminate face of Major Hark Varly he had been astounded by a still stronger resemblance to the face and form of Aspa Jarles and Lord Hayward.

In the fox-like, distorted visage of Hassan Wharle, he had shudderingly marked a palpable similitude to the countenance of Aspa Jarles.

"Which of the three," mentally exclaimed Sir Alvick, as his brain reeled under the weight of these three facts, each by itself a latent peril and menace to his peace—"which one of the three is the son of Aspa Jarles? Can it be possible that all three are the sons of Aspa Jarles? If all three are her children, is it probable that one of them is my son? And if so, great heavens, which one of the three is my son?"

Sir Alvick's countenance revealed nothing of his tumultuous thoughts. He simply drew his silken robe closely around him, as if somewhat chilly, folded his arms haughtily across his bosom, bent his piercing gaze steadily and unflinchingly upon Major Varly, and said, in reply to his last words:

"It is true. Aspa Jarles and the murdered marquis were first cousins, and had a very strong family resemblance. All this has nothing to do with the charge you have had the atrocious audacity to make against me and the late Sir Malcolm Ulster. You assert that Lord Hayward was murdered. Are you not aware that the jury of inquest upon his body were so much in doubt whether the marquis was slain or committed suicide, that the verdict expressed that doubt? You say that Aspa Jarles witnessed the death of the marquis. Why did she not come forward? She was a mercenary woman—why did she not come forward and give her evidence, for by so doing she would have obtained the large reward offered for the detection of the murderers?—if any murder were committed."

"Aspa Jarles may ere long reply to your question herself, Sir Alvick," answered Major Varly. "Perhaps she has reasons for her silence as potent as those which caused you and the late Sir Malcolm Ulster to offer that great reward. Who would suspect that the very men who slew the unfortunate lord, would dare offer a thousand pounds to increase the zeal of a search which might result in their own conviction? There was but one witness. You thought there was none. That one did not see fit to make known what she had seen. But that you may regard me with eyes less bold and scornful than I am accustomed to, permit me to make any assertion I

may be pleased to state, I will speak of the murdered marquis as he was—"

"You mean, as Aspa Jarles has informed you," interrupted the baronet with a sneer.

He longed to order this audacious young man from his presence, to have him ignominiously thrust forth if he did not obey; but prudence told him that he might have left some trace of his guilt unburied, or that Aspa Jarles had discovered some proof of his crime, beyond the mere existence of a suspicion.

No doubt Aspa Jarles was playing some deep game, and though he believed himself secure from conviction, he abhorred the idea of being publicly accused of an atrocious crime.

(To be continued.)

FACETIE.

A MAN may keep clear of debt, and yet "Oh!" a great deal.

A PERSON has such a cold in his head that he can't wash his face without freezing the water.

Is it hospitable when you ask a stout friend to come and see you, to tell him that you will give him a spare bed?

WHAT is the difference between the preserves of a certain fruit and a mass meeting of freedmen? None; each is a black jam.

THE electric hat is being worn by ladies in the street. Doubtless the object is to offer a light to the passing smoker, without a fuse.

"JIM," said one youngster to another, "Jim, lend me two pence, will ye? I got up so early that I spent all my money before my breakfast. I didn't think the day was going to be so long."

POPPING THE QUESTION.

A youth who much desired to wear the matrimonial yoke, had not sufficient courage to "pop the question." On informing his father of the difficulty he laboured under, the old gentleman replied passionately:

"Why, you great booby, how do you suppose I managed when I got married?"

"Oh, yes," said the bashful lover, "you married mother, but I've got to marry a strange girl!"

A PROFESSIONAL beggar-boy, some ten years of age, ignorant of the art of reading, bought a card to place on his breast, and appeared in the public streets as a "poor widow, with eight small children."

"MY dear Miss Jones, what are you conjugating in such a brown study?" Miss Jones, looking at a gentleman passing in the street below, replies: "Conjugating the verb 'to love' in the affirmative mood."

ONE of the boys in a school was asked, after various definitions had been given by others, mostly quite correct, what was meant by the verb to tantalize? He replied: "It was to ask a great many questions and then criticise the answers!"

AN ACUTE THIEF.

The following dialogue is stated to have taken place between a visiting magistrate at one of the city gaols and a juvenile offender serving out his three months:

"How old are you?"—"Please, sir, I'm thirteen."

"How often have you been in gaol?"—"Please, sir, eight times."

"Have you ever been in Reading gaol?"—"Please, sir, once."

"Have you ever been in Westminster gaol?"—"Please, sir, once."

"How often have you been here?"—"Please, sir, six times."

"Why do you come here so often?"—"Please, sir, becos at Westminster the turnkeys knocks yer about with their keys."

"How do you contrive to get sent here?"—"Please, sir, I allus prigs in Holborn now."

A FOUR-YEAR-OLD urchin at South Hadley lately greeted a cousin who had come from London to observe the country, through the medium of a pair of eye-glasses, with the remark: "Cousin Will, your spectacles haven't got any shafts to them."

Two knights of the angle having sought the shelter of a sorry ale-house for the night, one questioned the other the next morning as to how he had slept, observing that for his part he had "slept like a top." "So did I," replied his companion, "for I was turning round all night."

WHO HAS THE MOST VANITY?—A curious experiment was recently tried by two inhabitants of Vienna, between whom the question arose as to whether man or woman had the most vanity. Unable to convince each other, they made the subject a question of bet; the stakes were two hundred florins. To decide, they agreed to place themselves

before a mirror shop, and count the number of men and women who out of one hundred of either sex should admire themselves in the looking-glass. In an hour they counted out of one hundred women, eighty who had stopped to look at themselves, and out of one hundred men, ninety-five who paused to admire their faces.

A COUNTRYMAN going to market with a load of pork, was met by a young girl who very generally made him a low courtesy, when he exclaimed: "What do you make a courtesy to dead hogs?" "No, sir," answered the girl, "to a live one."

VICHY WATERS.

Wife: "Doctor Fox says I must go to Vichy! The waters are the only thing that will keep me from an early grave!"

Husband: "Then let Doctor Fox furnish the funds. I don't object to your going; you have only to show me where to get the money, for there they do not give credit, or I would go instantaneously."

WHO KNOWS?—But it may become fashionable for gentlemen to settle their little differences by pulling each other's noses? It is one of those things, however, that must be indulged in by both parties, or it will fail to give satisfaction.

A COUNTRYMAN who had been on a visit to London, on returning home, remarked that he never saw so many trees in his life as he saw in London. This led to a dispute and a bet, when the countryman being called upon to name the trees he saw, replied, "azalea-trees."

THE Duke of Edinburgh is said to have summed up his visit to the Australian colonies thus:—"In Adelaide they robbed me, in Melbourne they mobbed me, in Sydney they shot me, but in Queensland they took me to Jondavon." The last in its misery and blank want of interest was worse than the others.

CURING A DOCTOR.

Doctor: "You left it too late, Mrs. Snipps, before calling me in. I could have saved your husband if I had seen him at the beginning."

Mrs. Snipps: "Then when I get old enough to die, I'll call you in—say once a week, as a precaution, and then I won't die, as long as you're by to save me! Hey! What's your price for preventing death?"

CULTIVATE acquaintances, if desirable; if not, eat them. Never sow the seeds of dissension. Weed your library. Get as much heart-ease as you can. Attend to wallflowers and trim coxcombs. Emulate the cucumber—be cool. Don't peach. Avoid flowers of speech. "Bedding-out" is good for plants, but not for friends. Take the advice of the sage, or you may rue the consequence.

WEATHER IN JULY.

One exceedingly warm day in July, a neighbour met an old man, and remarked that it was very hot. "Yes," says Joe. "If it wasn't for one thing, I should say we were going to have a thaw."

"What is that?" inquired his friend.

"There's nothing froze," says Joe.

The man went on his way, much enlightened.

A LADY going to Madame Rachel to be made beautiful for ever, is in Richard the Third's position of standing "the hazard of the dye."—Punch.

ELECTION NEWS.—It is announced that Mr. McCombie, of Tillyfour, the great breeder of stock and winner of cups and medals, will be a candidate for the second seat to be given to Aberdeenshire. In the event of a contest, it is believed that every head of Scotch cattle will be "polled."—Punch.

WIDDLES FOR WALLFLOWERS.

Widdle: "When is a lovely young lady, who can't sound her 'r's,' like, by her own showing, a resplendent angel?"

Answer: "When she tells you that she wears a pair of gold wings."—Punch.

INCREDIBLE BARBARITY AT BRIDPORT.

As children, and especially little girls, would be very likely to weep on being sent to gaol, the case subjoined, if it has been truly stated by the *Sherborne Journal*, may be safely said to have been one of "great cry and little wool."

Justice is not asleep in the West:—Two little girls were brought up before a Bridport magistrate, on Monday, for the offence of picking wool off the carcass of a dead sheep, which they found lying in a ditch, and "on account of their youth" were discharged, of course—No; sent to the common gaol for three weeks!"

The fact that a magistrate had been really guilty of the brutality thus ascribed to a member of the Bridport quorum, would give good cause for pronouncing that the savage *Shallow* deserved to go to the original author of the remark above-quoted on shearing. Is it really true, however, that such great cry was caused for so little wool? In that case the

name of the justice who occasioned it ought to be known in order that, by direction of the Home Secretary, it may cease to disgrace the Commission of the Peace.—*Punch*.

A TIMELY WARNING.—What a fearful thing a general drought would be! Water, water nowhere, and not a drop to drink! And yet to this we must come, unless societies for the conservation of the English rivers are established everywhere to warn off oarsmen from their favourite work of destruction. We use the phrase, "work of destruction," advisedly, hearing from undoubted sources (of rivers) that boating is on the increase, and that everywhere stalwart young men and active boys are pulling up our most beautiful rivers.—*Punch*.

A YANKEE FACT.—The *New York Times* states that it has received a telegram announcing that the Bishop of London has ordered the name of the American President to be inserted in the prayer for the Queen and Parliament. Somebody has been hoaxing our Yankee friend—the Bishop of London would be "Taï" monté to think of such a thing.—*Fun*.

MEDAL AND MAGDALA.—The authorities at the Horse Guards do not mean to give a ribbon for the Abyssinian Campaign. They fear, should they do so, that it would be christened the "Medal and Muddle" Campaign—the medal, typifying the gallantry of our troops; the muddle, standing for the usual break-down of the Commissioner and other departments.—*Fun*.

INGRATITUDE IS THE DAUGHTER OF PRIDE.
Former Chancobac: "Tell 'e wot! Canon Girdle-stun's a poggon! Our workfolk are overspaid! Nine shillin' a week makes 'em saucy. Y'll hardly believe it, but I'd a sheep die yes'day of inflammation, and I tol' one o' my beggars he might ha' it if a liked:—'stead of being thankful for the bit o' mutton, durned if he didn't say as 'twere fitter for th' old sheepdog! Yew'd hardly believe it—but he did!"—*Fun*.

EGG-SEE.—There is reason in the roasting of eggs. But does any one know that there is reason why the manufacture of eggs into cheesesakes ought to be so cheap that any schoolboy should be able to buy more of those delicacies than he can eat at a sitting, for a very small sum? Those patriotic fellows, the photographers, whose motto is "pro aris et focis," reject the yoke—we beg pardon, yolk—and use the white of no end of eggs. We wonder whether this accounts in any way for the odd fact that cheap photographs and penny ices are almost invariably connected—that, in short, the photographer is generally a sort of partner in a confectioner's shop.—*Fun*.

WOMAN'S WORD-BOOK.

[For the use of our young friends]

Testament.—An act which proves the value of a husband.

Theatre.—A place of exhibition where the only serious comedy is played in the front of the house.

Thin.—A quality which, in woman's vintage only, recommends a good wine.

Thought.—A bird which flies too rapidly for woman to put any salt on its tail.

Time.—Woman's rival: for no tight lacing can compare with the waist of Time.

Tinsel.—The patent of stage nobility—but all the world is a stage.

Tobacco.—A pleasant weed before marriage, a foul habit after. N. B.—Widows' weeds are the only ones which don't end in smoke.—*Tomahawk*.

A PUBLIC school education has never been held to imply necessarily any extraordinary cultivation of the intellect. But there is one thing that everybody is supposed to learn at our public schools, and that is, to find their own level. Mr. Labouchere informed the House of Commons the other day that he had been three years at Eton, and had learned absolutely nothing. The honourable gentleman, on this occasion, had the whole House with him.—*Tomahawk*.

WHY NOT?

Every day we see the necessity arising for the improvement of London as regards the facilities required for free traffic and public convenience. A proposition was made not long since, seeing the loss of time and money many of the inhabitants of the west and south-west quarters incur at present, to create a sunk road across Hyde Park, connecting Tyburnia and Knightsbridge. That a road is absolutely necessary across the Park no one will deny, except those grand ladies who are capable of suggesting, when there is no bread for starving families, that they might eat buns. But why should the road be rendered an absurd expense by sinking it? What is there to prevent the authorities making a road across the Park from Westbourne-gate to Albert-gate, with a branch from the Knightsbridge end to the Marble Arch? The "swells" will be very slightly annoyed

by the sight of occasional four-wheelers, and if the aristocrats clamoured much against the common element, what would be easier than to make the public road go under the Row and the Drive by a tunnel? But to make a big ditch right across Hyde Park because Lord Dundreary or Lady Delicent can't abide the sight of four-wheelers and omnibuses is too preposterous for consideration.—*Tomahawk*.

THE KING'S FAVOURITE.

(An Oriental Tale.)

A SHEPHERD who was wont to keep With so much care his flock of sheep, That not a man in all the plains Could show the like in fleecy gains, Was noticed by the king ; who said, "One who so long has wisely led His worldly charge, must surely be A proper man to oversee A nobler flock ;—I make thee, then, A magistrate—to govern men!" "What," mused the shepherd, "shall I do ? A hermit and a wolf or two My whole acquaintance constitute (Except my sheep) of man or brute ! His reason bade the clown decide Against the place ; not so his pride. Ambition's plea at last prevails, And lo ! the shepherd takes the scales ! Soon as his hermit-neighbour heard What to the shepherd had occurred, His honest mind he thus expressed : "Tis surely but a royal jest, To make of thee, who never saw A written page of statute-law, Chief Justice of the realm !—I deem The tale is false—or do I dream ? Ah ! princely gifts are fatal things ; Beware, I say ; beware of Kings!"

The shepherd listens, but the while His only answer is a smile, As one whose happiness provokes The envy of inferior folks. "Alas!" the hermit cried, "I see The fabled waggoner in thee, Who lost his whip, and by mistake Took up instead a torpid snake, That, warming in his fingers, stung The foolish hand to which it clung ; A mortal bite ; do thou, my friend, Beware the like unhappy end!" And soon indeed the favourite found The hermit's plain advice was sound. The judge—although he did his best—Was most unequal to the test ; His judgments, set in legal light, Were quite as often wrong as right ; And, worst of all, around him rose A crowd of envious, spiteful foes, Who, one and all, contrive to bring The blackest slanders to the king, Who hears, amazed, the story told Of justice daily bought and sold ! Indeed, his enemies declare "His Honour" takes the lion's share, And with the fruit of bribe alone Has built a palace of his own !

The king, astounded at his guilt, Would see the palace he had built ; And finds—when all his search is done— A modest house of wood and stone. He opens next the fabled box Where, fast beneath a dozen locks, The judge's famous jewels lie ; But nothing meets the royal eye Except a shepherd's coat and cap, (The former rent in many a gap)— And—to reward his farther look— A shepherd's rusty pipe and crook ! "Oh, treasure precious to my eyes!" The judge exclaims, "from thee arise No hateful cares, nor envious lies ! These I resume, and learn, though late, Whoe'er aspires to serve the state, Should first consider well the case, If he is equal to the place ; And long reflect, before he makes That most egregious of mistakes— One's true vocation weakly spurned, To serve a trade he never learned!"—J. G. S.

THE RICH MEN OF THE WORLD.—The richest man in the world is not to be found in the Eastern, but in the Western hemisphere. He is not an Emperor, nor a Prince, but an American trader, with an income of nearly two millions sterling. Next to him comes a Russian boyard; the third is an Englishman who has large East India possessions. The name of Rothschild is only eleventh on the list. This re-

minds one of the late Mr. Thornton, who died some three years ago, leaving such an enormous sum that the legacy duty was an important addition to the receipts of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was his ambition to be the largest recipient of dividends at the Bank of England, and he used to show with some glee his half-yearly dividend warrant for nearly 40,000*l*. The Bank people, knowing his foible, used to worry him, and when he asked if he was not their chief customer, they would reply that there was one larger than he. At last he found out that this was the Court of Chancery, and he was content. He had no children, but left his money among nephews and nieces, and old employees. With one of his relatives he quarrelled, and so to punish her he left her only 100,000*l*.

EDUCATION.

WHATEVER may be your habits of industry, whatever may be your desire to obtain property, whatever you may do to render yourself opulent, and your circumstances easy and independent, unless some portion of your time is appropriated to the acquisition of knowledge, your castle of happiness must fall to the ground. Even the desire of obtaining it discovers a liberal mind, as it is connected with many accomplishments and virtues. Though your train of life should not lead you to study, yet the cause of education always promotes proper employment to a well-disposed mind.

Virtue itself is only fostered by an improvement of the sensibilities, and in the absence of this infallible trait all the riches of this world are incompetent to render any one happy. Therefore, considering these circumstances, would it not be well to incorporate in your system of business the appropriation of a small part of your time to the useful improvement of the mind?

The object and end of our existence is happiness, and it cannot be accelerated unless we call to our aid the assistance of education. Application and study will progress and further our state of earthly happiness; knowledge adds greatly to our temporal enjoyment, and systematizes the effects and influence of contentment and happiness upon our natural minds. Education constitutes everything, and through it we realize every mental enjoyment. Without education our situation would be placed on a level with that of the brute.—J. T. Y.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE HANDEL FESTIVAL.—The returns of this grand triennial gathering in the Crystal Palace to do honour to the immortal Handel show that it has been the most successful of all the meetings. In 1857 the figures were 38,414; in 1859, 81,319; in 1862, 67,567; in 1865, 59,434; in 1868, 82,465.

PRIZES TO VOLUNTEERS.—The following curious list of prizes was lately distributed to the crack shots of a Northern regiment of Volunteers.—One china service, one silver Albert chain, one Britannia metal teapot, one copper tea-kettle, one dozen *cartes de visite*, a two-foot rule, and one plum cake.

A TOAD FOUND IN A ROCK.—The other day while some labourers were engaged in cutting a drain in the High-street, Selkirk, they came upon a toad embedded in the rock at a distance of five feet from the surface. At the place where the reptile was discovered, the first foot from the top was composed of loose earth, but the next four feet were of solid rock. On breaking the part of the stone in which it was embedded, the toad at once crept out from a space not larger than was sufficient to contain it. Of course the curiosity was properly taken care of, and it appears quite lively. It is somewhat less than the ordinary size of the toad species, and its coating is very dark, and of a warty appearance.

A FIXED LINE OF FLIGHT BY BIRDS.—Mr. Jaques, the station-master at Bitchburn Station, on the Darlington Section of the North-Eastern Railway, near Bishop Auckland, has, for the nine years he has been at that station, picked up nine corn-crakes, which have been killed by flying against one of the seven telegraphic wires, and the spot where they have fallen has not varied above a yard. He has obtained one every year except the year 1866, but in the year 1867 two were picked up. He has in the same way, and at precisely the same spot, also picked up snipe killed in this manner. Although partridges are not unfrequently brought down by flying against wires at this station, yet he has never witnessed one that was thus killed, and never secured one. No doubt such occurrences must happen in other parts of the kingdom; and it would be interesting, and might lead to some discovery of the why and wherefore a fixed line of flight is pursued by birds, if some naturalists interested would report such occurrences.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. R.—1. To break open an outer door is illegal. 2. Between sunrise and sunset.

N. K.—Yes, they are always open during the summer months. Why not apply by letter?

A SUBSCRIBER FROM THE COMMENCEMENT.—It is a weekly publication. Apply to any newspaper agent.

L. HARMAN.—The romance is declined with thanks, our arrangements being complete for months to come.

CHARLOTTE B.—We must refer our fair correspondent to the notice at the bottom of the last column of this page.

A REGULAR SUBSCRIBER.—Different owners charge different fares; you can see a list in any of the morning papers.

PoETRY.—"Poems" by Eleanor, are not devoid of merit, but unfortunately are too lengthy for our columns, therefore are declined with thanks.

WATER SPANIEL.—Take a cold water sponge bath daily; to bathe every morning in a river is without doubt unhealthy.

WELSHMAN.—The rector is behaving not only illegally but shamefully. You should place the matter in the hands of a solicitor.

A LOVER OF MUSIC.—Do not tamper with your lips; it would be attended with danger; while practising, use a little good lip-salve, and time will do the rest.

NINA CLAXTON.—You can only ascertain by applying personally or by letter to one of the Nottingham manufacturers.

WILD LILY asks us at what age a young lady can have her own will without any interference from her father. Legally on attaining the age of twenty-one.

A LOVER OF THE LONDON READER.—1. We know nothing of the medical man you mention. 2. Handwriting very good.

FANNY.—Churchwardens have a right to the possession of the keys of a church, as they are responsible for the manner of its keeping and arrangements.

JOE.—Linda, from Linden, a lime-tree; Maude, a corruption from Magdalen, which name signifies weeping; Claude, halting, limping; handwriting good.

LITTLE DORRIT.—No gentleman would send a lady a pair of garters by way of present, nor would a lady who had any regard for self-respect return the questionable compliment.

O. JOHNSON.—Your question is so complicated that we cannot safely advise you, otherwise than to consult a respectable solicitor. By doing this at once you will save both time and money.

A CONSTANT READER.—1. You will find all the information you require in a "Bradshaw," or the "A. B. C." Railway Guide. 2. Apply to the secretary of the office in which your life is assured.

ELLEN.—To make grape jelly, mix together equal quantities of the juice of ripe grapes and dissolved isinglass; should it require sweetening, which is rarely the case, add powdered sugar to your taste, pour in two glasses of Madeira, and put into moulds.

A LOOR.—Having so long accustomed yourself to the use of that most pernicious drug, you can only safely break yourself of the habit by discontinuing it by degrees; commence by reducing your quantum per diem by one third, after a few weeks reduce again to one half, and so on.

J. ALLAN.—Hair-cloth is a species of cloth made of horse-hair, laid upon the floors of magazines and laboratories, to prevent accidents. It is usually made up in pieces fourteen feet long, and eleven feet wide, each weighing about thirty-six pounds.

S. S.—In chess, if a player take one of his adversary's men with one of his own, that cannot take it without making a false move, his antagonist has the option of compelling him to take it, with a piece or pawn that can legally take it, or to move his own pawn which he touched.

O. M. C.—Saturday is the seventh day, which the Jews keep as the sabbath in commemoration of the creation of the world, and of their redemption from the bondage of the Egyptians. Christians observe the first day of the week, on account of the resurrection of Christ on that day, and the redemption of man.

PETER.—Wait not for difficulties to cease; there is no soldier's glory to be won on peaceful fields, no sailor's daring to be shown on sunny seas, no trust or friendship to be proved when all goes well. Faith, patience, heroic love, devout courage, are not to be formed when there are no doubts, no pains, no irritations, no difficulties.

LOUIS.—A true Christian never indulges in evil speaking, it is mean and cowardly, and the sure indication of a low and vulgar mind. A woman given to this vice is generally little less than a monster. There is one circumstance attending the sin of slander, which renders it peculiarly in-

jurious, the difficulty of calculating the ill-effects produced by it. When once you have uttered the words of slander, it is no longer in your power to stop their progress; they travel from one to another into general circulation. "Behold," says the Apostle, "what a great fire a little spark kindles."

A CONSTANT READER.—Logwood and green copperas are commonly used to make a black dye, but the colour will be improved by first boiling the article in a decoction of galls and elder-barks; if previously dyed blue or brown, by means of walnut-peels, it will be still better. 2. Handwriting requires care and practice.

CORDELIA.—1. The rosin and bees'-wax when melted and made into sticks, are similar to rolled pomatum, and must be used in the same way, that is, rubbed into the roots of the part affected with superfluous hair. 2. Do not attempt to change the style of your handwriting, but practise carefully.

NORMAN.—The Postmaster-general is a high officer of state appointed by patent. He makes contracts for the conveyance of the public mails, and sees that they are properly executed; he also receives the money arising from the postage of letters, pays the expenses, keeps the accounts of the office, and superintends the whole department.

MARSHAL.—In gardening, the term Hoeing means earthing up the stems of young plants, loosening the soil, and making drills for the sowing of seeds. Woody plants, however, should not be earthed up. That portion of a tree or plant immediately above the soil, is called the neck or collar, and is the seat of life in all plants; care therefore should be taken not to injure it.

P. M.—To dye the hair brown, take three-pennyworth of nitrate of silver, and dilute it in about two tablespoomfuls of water; wash your hair with this by means of a perfectly clean brush, taking care not to touch the skin; when this is dry, proceed in the same way with ammonia, which will fix the nitrate of silver. The hair must first be washed free from oil or grease of any description.

DUDLEY.—Kinder-Garten, or children's garden, means a system of education for young children devised by Froebel, but practically carried out by Mr. and Mrs. Ronge, first in Germany in 1849, and in England in 1861. The system, which is founded mainly on self-tuition and makes use of toys, games, &c., enlivened by singing, is set forth in Ronge's "Kinder-Garten," published in 1858.

ON THE SEA-SHORE.

The waves chimed on the yellow shore,
Where in the sun I lay;
Rough mounds arose my feet before,
Upheaved by childish play.

They marred the soft and shining sand,
As sins deface the soul;
But, sh! not long; across the strand
The rising waters roll.

Fast as the tide each hand-heap nears,
The child-raised structure fell;
Would that the wave of after years
Washed out young sins as well!

T. H.

JOHN.—The Welsh emblem of the leek, is in consequence of a command from Dewi, or David, afterwards canonised archbishop of St. David's in 519. This prelate, on the day that King Arthur won a great victory over the Saxons, is said to have ordered every one of his soldiers to place a leek in his cap, for the sake of distinction; in memory of which the Welsh wear the leek on the first of March.

AN ORPHEAN.—We know of no other institution than the National Orphan Home, Ham Common, Surrey. This institution is meant to afford a home to destitute female orphans, of all ages, classes, and denominations, from all parts of the kingdom. Admittance is obtained by election in January and July; or by annual payments of from ten to fifteen guineas; or by one payment of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty guineas.

A. RENSHAW.—1. To be married in a church by banns, or at a registrar's office, requires the same notice, viz., three weeks; the cost is only a few shillings; but one of the contracting parties is required to reside in the parish where the marriage is to take place, and that must be for fourteen days; the attendance of relatives is not necessary, if their consent has been obtained. 2. The price of an ordinary licence is about 2/- 10s.

A. GOOCH.—The Kit-Cat Club, consisting of about thirty noblemen and gentlemen, was instituted in 1703, to promote the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover. Addison, Steele, and Dr. Garth were members, and made several epigrams upon the toasts of the club. It took its name from Christopher Kat, a pastry-cook, who lived near the tavern, in King Street, Westminster, and served them with pastry.

HAMILTON.—The Rosicrucians were a sect of mystical philosophers, who first appeared in Germany in the 14th century, and again early in the 17th century. They derived their name from the *Confessio Rosea Crucis* of Valentine Andreas, 1615. They swore fidelity, promising secrecy, and wrote hieroglyphically; they also affirmed that the ancient philosophers of Egypt, the Chaldeans, Magi of Persia, and Gymnosophists of the Indies, taught the same doctrine.

CLAUDE.—The Bassett Horn is now but seldom used; its tone is very sweet, and in solo passages it is capable of producing very striking effects. It resembles a hautboy of a large size, a little bent at the top; its real compass comprises the notes contained between F bass and B alt, except the note F sharp, which is deficient. As the person who plays the hautboy generally takes this instrument, in fact, it is usually written a fifth higher than its usual pitch.

LIXYARD.—Latetit means a writ by which persons are usually called to the King's Bench Court, and it has this name from its being supposed that the defendant is lying hid, and cannot be found in the county to be taken by bill, and the writ is directed to the sheriff to apprehend him. This process of law is of old and undefined date, and was abolished in England, in all actions where it was not intended to hold the defendant to special bail, by the Uniformity of Process Act, 1822.

C. D. A.—1. Apply to any respectable chemist, who will give you all the information you require on the subject; in some constitutions and states of the body, soda and alkalis are conducive to health. 2. Of all acids vinegar is the best, and it is the most commonly used; it is antiseptic, and it

also assists digestion, if taken moderately. Vinegar forms part of the rations of the soldiers of ancient Rome, every man carrying a small stone bottle of it, to correct the qualities of doubtful water which they might have to drink on their marches; it is sometimes used to reduce corpulence, but this effect can only be obtained at the cost of injury to the stomach.

A. W.—All kinds of kid gloves may be cleaned in the following manner: place a little new milk in one saucer, and in another a old cloth or folded towel, with a piece of brown soap; spread the glove on the towel, then take a piece of flannel, dip it in the milk, rub some of the soap upon it, and rub the glove downwards towards the finger-ends; continue doing this, until they look dark and spoiled, then lay them to dry, and the gloves will look as good as new.

KATHLEEN.—To make mead, put 5 lbs. of honey to one gallon of water; when the water is hot, put the honey into it, and boil it for an hour and a half; as soon as the scum begins to rise, take it off, and continue skimming as long as any arises; put 2 oz. of hops to every ten gallons of liquor, and 2 oz. of coriander seed, each in a separate bag; the rind of three or four lemons and oranges may be added, if liked. When cool, put it into the cask with a bottle of brandy, and stop it up quite close; it should remain about nine months in the barrel, but for the sweetness to go off, it should stand still longer.

HERVET.—Work is the iron ploughshare that goes over the field of the heart, rooting up all the pretty grasses, and the beautiful hurtful weeds, that we have taken such pleasure in growing, laying them all under, fair and foul together, making plain, dull-looking arable land for our neighbours to peer at, until at night-time, down in the deep furrows, the angels come and sow. A man who can give up dreaming, control the feelings of his heart, be it love or woe, and take valiantly to work, who dares fate, and if he must die, dies fighting to the last, that man is ill's best hero.

Y. Y. Y., a widow, middle age, a tradesman's daughter, without family; a publican preferred.

J. G. L., twenty-three, good looking, with 120/- a year. Respondent must be fair, and about the same age.

BLUE MOUNTAIN, thirty-nine, overseer, income 150/. Respondent must be about thirty, residing in London or vicinity.

J. P., thirty-one, 5 ft. 9 in., dark hair and beard, has a good situation, and is good tempered. Respondent must be respectable, and fond of music.

JEANNIE, nineteen, brown hair, hazel eyes, medium height, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark and handsome.

GRETNA, seventeen, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, can play well, and thoroughly domesticated, will have money when of age, a tradesman preferred.

BELL, nineteen, 5 ft. 1 in., fair hair, blue eyes, a lively disposition, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be steady, respectable, and fond of home.

ANNE, twenty-one, medium height brown hair, blue eyes, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be a respectable mechanic preferred, not over twenty-seven.

LILY STANHOPE, medium height, dark brown hair, grey eyes, good figure, and domesticated. Respondent must be dark, steady, sober, and respectfully connected. A tradesman preferred.

MARIAN C., twenty-four, good looking, has a little money, and is a good housekeeper. Respondent must be steady and respectable, between thirty and forty preferred, and able to support a wife comfortably.

EFER, twenty-six, a widow, tall, dark hair, expressive eyes, warm hearted, and agreeable. Respondent must be fair, tall, and have a sufficient income to support a wife comfortably.

MILLIE, thirty, a widow with one little son, medium height, fair eyes, wavy auburn hair, and a first-rate housekeeper. Respondent must be tall, dark, not over thirty-five, and affectionate, a schoolmaster preferred.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

HENRY is responded to by—"Rosie," eighteen and pretty; and—"L. B. A." eighteen, good looking, and fond of home.

J. W. P. by—"Ada."

J. W. L. by—"Lylian Dovey," twenty-one, well educated, fair, pretty, above the medium height, and has an income of 130/-.

J. D. S. by—"Aurora," tall, dark, brown eyes, and of a very loving disposition.

ROBERT WILLIAMS by—"Maud," fair, blue eyes, and very domesticated.

LOUISA E. by—"C. O. J." twenty-three, 5 ft. 9 in., dark, good looking, and in a respectable position.

ALICE and BETH by—"William Douglass."

N. A. S. by—"C. J. Adams," twenty-one, 5 ft. 7 in., and holds a respectable position.

ELLEN J. by—"A. C. H." twenty-six, a mechanic, tall, fair, blue eyes, good looking, steady, and of a loving disposition.

EMILY C. S. by—"W. G. W." a sailor, medium height, cheerful, and good tempered.

EDWARD by—"Viol," twenty-one, dark hair and eyes, 5 ft. 8 in., good tempered, and thoroughly domesticated; and—"M. W." medium height, dark, and affectionate, has no money, but would make a good wife.

DANBY by—"Fred C."

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